

Final & Thorough Confutation of the Rather Superficially Invincible but Ultimately Untenable Fortress of Pro-FDG Notions built by BRD's & MAD's Conjoint Venture. (Inclusive of A Prolonged Appendix Containing Analysis on certain aspects of the SAC Position Paper of 2005 on FDG Issue. Pt. 1st of the total draft.)

- *Authored by Rādhākṛṣṇadāsa Brahmācārī GKG (alias Mr. Ramkrishna R. Swami)*

Executive Summary— Two senior and respected devotees within the ISKCON movement, namely H.G. Bhaktarūpadāsa Adhikārī Prabhu (ACBSP) and H.G. Mādhavānandadāsa Adhikārī Prabhu (GGS) have written an essay titled “Some Evidence Regarding Education and Guruship for Vaiṣṇavīs”, [their said essay has been submitted to the ISKCON India Bureau (IIB) and to the ISKCON GBC] in which by citing numerous *śāstras* they try to show the eligibility of *sādhaka-vaiṣṇavīs* (female devotees in the lower and intermediate stages of devotion) to be *dīkṣā-gurus*. But Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam supersedes all the twenty-three books from which they have taken quotations. In the chronological order, **S.B. excels the authenticity of all other Vedic literature. Vedas or śrutis are overruled by the smṛtis, while smṛtis are transgressed by the overwhelming authority of itihāsas and purāṇas.** However, to be found in Vedic literature are apparently contradictory statements that corroborate the notion propounding the *śrutis*’ (i.e. four Vedas’ and their corollaries’) par excellence as compared to the *smṛtis*. According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī’s sub-commentary i.e. Sarva-samvādinī on the twelfth *Anuccheda* of the Tattva Sandarbha, such demeaning assertions apply only to the inferior *smṛtis* comprising the various books authored by mortal sages such as Kaṇāda, Pantañjali, Gautama, and atheistic Kapila (**even Jaimini is not to be taken as an absolute authority for granted as Vyāsadeva has also opposed and differed from his views numerous times in the Vedānta Sūtra i.e. vide V.S. 3.4.18-19, V.S. 1.3.31-33, V.S. 1.3.34-38 and its Govinda Bhāṣya**) – all which are never to be considered on an equal plane with the Vedas or *śrutis*. There is thus a hierarchy of authority amongst the *śrutis*, *smṛtis*, *itihāsas* and *purāṇas*. And as will also be shown, there are relative weights of authority between differing statements within the same *śāstra*. This is the understanding with which our *purvācāryas* have approached *śāstra*.

Without knowing this hierarchy of authority, or by disrespecting it, the conclusions implied by the statements one quotes in favour of his own position are worthless. One who disrespects this hierarchy

will quote some authority to prove his view without knowing that other statements he has disfavoured actually supersedes the authority of his preferred statement. **For example, on pages 4 and 5 of their essay, Bhaktarūpa Prabhu and Mādhavānanda Prabhu have quoted Jaimini's P.M.S. 6.1.3.6. to establish that in Vyāsadeva's view ladies are permitted to perform Vedic sacrifices. But, in S.B. 1.4.25 and Vedānta Sūtra (V.S.) 1.3.34-38, Vyāsadeva considers women and śūdras to be ineligible to study the Vedas and thereby has implied that they cannot perform the Vedic sacrifices and also cannot undergo the sacred-thread ceremony.** Because Prabhus Bhaktarūpa and Mādhavānanda have commented without properly respecting the differing levels of authority held by different śāstras, they have come to an erroneous conclusion. Such specious conclusions are like chunks of glass cut into the shapes of diamonds. Their purpose can only be to mislead others, not benefit them. As will be seen, their essay is a mine of such worthless conclusions.

It may be that Bhaktarūpa and Mādhavānanda Prabhus give undue authority to the śrutis (Vedas) over the smṛtis on account of the widely held misconception that only the Vedas are *apauruṣeya*. **But this is solely a Mādhva conception (refer to Viṣṇu-tattva-vinirṇaya of Madhvācārya), not the Gauḍīya conception. Otherwise, S.B. will also become *pauruṣeya*, which Jīva Gosvāmī does not accept. However, such demeaning assertions can never be made applicable to smṛtis like Manu Smṛti (Manu Smṛti is considered higher than the Vedas) and the *apauruṣeya* i.e. immortal Purāṇas (even higher than the Manu Smṛti). This hierarchical gradation has been accepted by Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī while quoting Skanda Purāṇa's Prabhāsa-khaṇḍa 3.121-124 in His Tattva Sandarbha, Anuccheda 17.1.**

Another important consideration is the difference in authority between versions of statements in śāstras as accepted and quoted by our ācāryas as compared to other versions in current editions of those śāstras. Wherever there is a difference, the versions quoted by our ācāryas are to be accepted over the variations found elsewhere. **On pages 9 and 10 of their essay, Bhaktarūpa and Mādhavānanda Prabhus have exposed their deviance from Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī's and Śrīla Gopālabhatta Gosvāmī's quotation from Viṣṇu Purāṇa 3.12.30. They have sought to the variation in the reading of that text (i.e. *pāṭha-bheda*) which is not found in any published editions and unpublished manuscripts of Haribhaktivilāsa.** According to the convention of the Gauḍīya Sampradāya, only those versions accepted and quoted by our previous ācāryas can be accepted as bona fide and not those which are merely viewable in the currently published editions of those quoted books (i.e. in our case Viṣṇu Purāṇa). **If this is not accepted, then many scriptural quotations by our previous ācāryas will be considered unauthentic simply because they are not to be found in any current editions of those quoted books.** One such instance is the citation of famous verse "*sampradāya-vihīnā ye mantrāḥ te niṣphalā matāḥ*" by our previous ācāryas like Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa and attributed to the Padma Purāṇa. However, this is not to be found in any current published editions of Padma Purāṇa. Also, all currently available versions of Kali-santaraṇa-upaniṣad have the *Mahāmantra* in reverse order, but according to the belief of our *Sampradāya*, Mahāprabhu did not change any sequence of *Mahāmantra* from its original form appearing in the said *Upaniṣad*.

Also, the Bhaktarūpa and Mādhavānanda Prabhus' quotations from Hari-bhakti-vilāsa (H.B.V.) only emphasize women's and śūdras' eligibility to perform *arcana* of *śālagrāma-śilā* and receive *pāñcarātrika-mantras*, **but nowhere does H.B.V. support the conjecture of women's eligibility to wear and bestow the sacred-thread which is traditionally meant only for males, as illustrated by Śrīla Prabhupāda's purport to S.B. 1.4.25. Also on page 3 of their draft, the Yama Smṛti has been misinterpreted out of context to show the women's eligibility for wearing sacred thread, as shall be shown by us during its analysis.**

On page 2 of their paper, Bhaktarūpa and Mādhavānanda Prabhus have cited Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam only once (4.1.64) in direct support of females' general eligibility to become *dīkṣa-gurus*, namely that they are allowed to study the Vedas. **Unfortunately, their citation from S.B. has been done only in an insignificant manner for the sake of fulfilling formality, and with erroneous interpretation of the context. Without comprehending the exceptional contextual nature of S.B. 4.1.64, they have applied the logic of that verse in the general rule. Truly speaking, they have deviated in a great extent from the Gaudīya path of tackling with the *pramāṇa-tattva* which has resulted in the successive collapse of the *prameya-tattva* ascertained by them.**

In *śāstras*, only those statements considered as *vidhi-vākyas* (assertions allotting dictums) are to be applied in the general norms and not the *upākhyāna-vākyas* (assertions depicting historical incidents and facts). **S.B. 4.1.64 is narrating a history (and that also an exceptional case) and loses its value against S.B. 1.4.25 which is the *vidhi-vākya* (as clearly evident from the tone of the verse itself) commonly applicable to the general norms of *varṇāśrama-dharma*.** A precedent of such scholarly analysis can be seen in Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī's Kṛṣṇa Sandarbha (in regards to the topic pertaining to the *svayam-bhagavatā* i.e. primeval Godhood of Lord Kṛṣṇa) wherein, He establishes S.B. 1.3.28 as the *paribhāṣā-vākya* (the proposition defining a particular conclusion) and all other seemingly contradictory statements (such as S.B. 10.2.16 etc.) as subordinate to the said *paribhāṣā-vākya*. **Similarly, SP's purport on S.B. 4.12.32 serves as the *vidhi-vākya* among all pro-FDG & anti-FDG instructions of SP, as shall be duly shown in the appendix of this Paper. Why? Because, the said purport is the most specific statement by SP in regards to females' *dīkṣa-guruship* among His Divine Grace's whole corpus of gospels.**

Clarifying note - The statements found in S.B. 4.12.32 can also be considered to be *upākhyāna-vākyas*, but they are not merely depicting tales. Let us reflect further on the most crucial statement of the said evidence.

"Sunīti, however, being a woman, and specifically his mother, could not become Dhruva Mahārāja's dīkṣā-guru."

>>> Ref. VedaBase => SB 4.12.32

The phrase "could not become Dhruva Mahārāja's dīkṣā-guru" also implies a *vidhi* or regulation by the usage of the very words "could not become". Hence, the S.B. 4.12.32 Purport's statement is a mixture of *vidhi-vākya* and *upākhyāna-vākya*.

Thus ends the clarifying note.

"The *vidhi-vākyas* implied and often cited elsewhere by Śrīla Prabhupāda (e.g. *na striyaṁ svatantram arhati*, and the S.B. 7.11.25 etc.) will be discussed later in Section X of the Appendix. **In their paper, primary emphasis has been given to Vedas and less famous *smṛtis* only, while simultaneously sidelining the importance of Manu Smṛti; whereas, Śrīmad Bhagavad-gīta has been left untouched in their 20 pages long essay.** The verse from S.B. 1.4.25 supersedes all their statements either directly, indirectly, or mistakenly supporting the perverted idea of female *dīkṣa-gurus* as a conventional social norm for female *sādhakas*, for which there is no precedent in our *sāmpradaya*. Also, the S.B. 4.12.32 verse is specifically denying the *dīkṣa-guruship* (*dīkṣa-guruship* has been differentiated from the *vartma-pradarśaka-guruship* etc. in that same Bhaktivedānta Purport to S.B. 14.12.32) for women. It is very clear and specific statement.

Not only have authors Bhaktarūpa and Mādhavānanda Prabhus totally ignored the Gīta, but they have underrepresented Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam as well—thus curtailing the conventional belief of our *sampradāya* culminating in the par excellence spotless evidential nature of S.B. as verified in the celebrated verse commencing with “*ārādhyo bhagavān vrajeśatanayaḥ . . . śāstram bhāgavatam pramāṇamamalam . . .*” and which is found in the Caitanya-mata-mañjūṣā commentary of S.B. by Śrīnātha Cakravartīpāda. Although there are other quotations from S.B. found in the cited passage from H.B.V. on page 12 of their paper, those quotes do not have any direct reference to women’s rights; rather they have been cited by Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī to prove the transcendence of a *Vaiṣṇava* born in an outcaste family. Quotes from S.B. found on page 17 of their draft also are general statements revealing the triple paths of worship. This de-emphasis of our core *śāstras* (S.B., and Gītā) in order to accommodate women’s equal rights for *dīksā-guruship* and a corresponding emphasis on the Vedas and less famous *smṛtis* moves us in the direction of becoming more like other contemporaneous non-*Vaiṣṇava*, neo-Hindu movements.

Prabhus Bhaktarūpa and Mādhavānanda have quoted at numerous times from Sāyaṇācārya's classical commentary on Vedas and also from Mādhavācārya's (alias Vidyāraṇya Muni) exegesis; both of these authors are Māyāvādīs. This Mādhavācārya is not the Madhāvācārya in our disciplic succession but instead is the brother of Sāyaṇācārya. This Mādhavācārya (Vidyāraṇya Muni) had taken *sannyāsa* into the Śāṅkarīte order and had become the most celebrated writer of the historically two classical works viz., the Vedānta Pañcadaśī – a most widely read elementary book of *Advaita Vedānta* of Śāṅkarācārya and the Sarva-darśana-saṅgraha. His *sannyāsa* name was Vidyāraṇya Muni and he adorned the Dakṣiṇāmnāya Śṛṅgerī Pīṭham in the 14th century. Sāyaṇācārya remained a *gṛhastha* and was a *smārta* (not *Vaiṣṇava*) throughout his life. **So, both were staunch *pañcopāsaka* Māyāvādīs.**

The views on the proper social and occupational roles of females put forward by Bhakta-rūpa Prabhu and Mādhavānanda Prabhu closely resemble the Ārya Samājī's views on females. For example, there is one renowned Ārya Samājī scholar by the name of Dr. Surendra Kumāra - the so-called Bhāṣyakāra of Manu-smṛti, was (and is now also coming) coming on the 'Āsthā Bhajana' religious channel (this is an Indian religious TV channel) everyday from 8:30 p.m. to 09:00 p.m. IST. He recently delivered a few days' series of Hindī discourses in the first week of Jan. 2013 erroneously establishing how the Vedas, *upaniṣads*, and *smṛtis* allow women to undertake the august study of Vedas, perform fire sacrifices, and wear the sacred thread. And we see that Prabhus Bhaktarūpa and Mādhavānanda also try show that women are indeed allowed to do these very things.

But we see that our *ācāryas* like Jayatīrtha Muni consider such cases to be exceptions only. The Ārya Samāja and Gāyatrī Parivāra are heterodox and neo-*māyāvādī* institutions that don't believe in deity worship and have rejected the *purāṇas*. And they both allow women to do fire sacrifices, wear sacred thread, and undertake study of the Vedas. But this is not the mood of the Mādhva Sampradāya or the Gauḍīya Sampradāya, especially the Gauḍīya lineage descending downwards from SBSST. It is telling that the views immanent in the essay written by Prabhus Bhaktarūpa and Mādhavānanda (hereafter, referred to as the said contenders) will bring us more in line with such neo-*māyāvādī* institutions and distance us further from the *siddhāntas* of our own *paramparā*.

Thus ends the Executive Summary.

Prima Facie View # 1 (i.e. BRD's & MAD's stand). Section 1 (Page # 2 of BRD's Paper) The Introductory Comments—

WOMEN IN THE VEDAS

The Vedic age can be described correctly only in the language of the Vedas and its supporting literature — the various *brāhmaṇas*, *upaniṣads*, etc. The following passages offer an insight into the position and rights of women in the Vedic age.

Note: The addressing designations like 'antagonists', 'contenders', and 'opponents', used by us to indicate the personages whose views are contradictory to ours, are in no way indications of our personal animosity with them since, such personal hostility cannot exist in the *vaiṣṇava* domain. Such designations merely denote our mutual philosophical disputation ranging 360°. Also, designations like 'feminism' and 'feminist(s)' have been used not in a derogatory sense, but to just reveal the actuality of the contenders' stand.

Conclusive Stand # 1 (i.e. RKDB's stand) – The initial proposition of the antagonists is faulty, as shall be explained. Their prolonged deliberation does not take into account the conventional Gauḍīya way of contemplation pertaining to the *tāratamya-mūlaka-pramāna-tattva* (i.e. the hierarchical principle of categorical evidence), from which the factual *prameya-tattva* (the knowledge derived from such evidence i.e. in our case is the conclusion on the female *dīksā-guru* [FDG] issue) can be derived.

The Vedic age can be depicted correctly only in the language of the *Itihāsas* (i.e. significantly comprising *Mahābhārata* and *Vālmiki Rāmāyana*) *Purāṇas* esp. the chief among them i.e. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. The Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya (the lineage to which ISKCON belongs to), following in the footsteps of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmīpāda and His classical work i.e. the *Śaṭ-sandarbha*, only accepts the interpretation of quadruple Vedas and its ancillary literature penned through the clarifying and unmistakable lens of the said *pañcama-veda* i.e. *Itihāsas* and *Purāṇas*. Hence, any independent interpretation of the four Vedas and its corollary literature shall constitute the concocted and erroneous viewpoint of heterodox modern religious institutions like the Ārya Samāja and Gāyatrī Parivāra.

Evidence # 1 –

Tattva Sandarbha, Anucchedas 12.1-2
Difficulties in studying the Vedas.

12.1 *tatra ca veda-śabdasya samprati duṣpāratvād duradhigamārthatvāc ca tad-artha-nirṇāyakānām munīnām api paraspara-virodhād veda-rūpo vedārtha-nirṇāyakaś cetihāsa-purāṇātmakaḥ śabda eva vicāraṇīyaḥ. tatra ca yo vā veda-śabdo nātma-viditaḥ so 'pi tad-dṛṣṭyānumeya eveti samprati tasyaiva pramoṭpādakatvaṁsthitam.*

Rendition

“We should consider: The authoritative sound of the Vedas is impossible for anyone in present times to study completely, **its meaning is difficult to construe**, and **even the sages who have explained it in commentaries disagree among one another**. For these reasons we would be well advised to turn our

attention to the *śabda-pramāṇa* of the *Itihāsas* and *Purāṇas*, which are substantially non-different from the Vedas and which definitively explain what the Vedas mean. Since the Vedic texts whose purport is not self-evident can be deciphered by reference to the *Itihāsas* and *Purāṇas*, the *Itihāsas* and *Purāṇas* are the appropriate sources of correct knowledge for our times.”

Remarks (by RKDB): It is to be noted here that, since the meanings of the four Vedas and their ancillaries are difficult to apprehend along with the mutual discord also existing among the sages and scholars who have interpreted the Vedas, **we are bound to conclude that the Vedic interpretations of *smārta* (non-*vaiṣṇava*) *Sāyaṇācārya* (one of the only three Sanskrit commentators on all the four Vedas; the others being Demon Rāvaṇa of Tretā Yuga and Maharṣi Dayānanda Sarasvatī of 19th Century - the Founder of Ārya Samāja) of 14th Century cannot be taken as an evidence to comprehend the actual imports of the Vedic passages.** Rather, if direct commentaries on the Vedas have to be referred to, then our Śrīpāda Ānandatīrtha Pūrṇaprajña Madhvācārya’s Ṛg-Veda Bhāṣya (commentary on the first forty hymns of the Ṛg-Veda only which serves as the solely available Vaiṣṇava commentary on the Vedas) can be studied.

12.2 *tathā hi mahābhārata mānavīye ca, itihāsa-purāṇābhyāmvedam samupabṛmhayet¹ iti pūraṇāt purāṇam iti cānyatra. na cāvedenavedasya bṛmhaṇam sambhavati na hy aparipūrṇasya kanaka-valayasyatrapuṇā pūraṇam yujyate.*

Rendition

“Thus we read in both the Mahābhārata and the **Manu-saṁhitā**, ‘One should complete the Vedas with the *Itihāsas* and *Purāṇas*’.¹ And elsewhere it is said, ‘The name *Purāṇa* comes from the word “completion” [*pūraṇa*].’ Just as one cannot properly fill in the missing part of a broken gold bangle with cheap tin, one cannot complete the Vedas with that which is not also Veda.”

Remarks (by RKDB) – It is to be gravely noted how Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmīpāda is emphasizing Manu-Smṛti alias Manu-Saṁhitā on par with Mahābhārata in the very beginning of His Tattva-Sandarabha i.e. the first among His six *sandarbhas*.

Evidence # 2 – *bibheti alpa-śrutād vedo māmayaṁ prahariṣyati²*

Rendition

“The four Vedas are apprehensive (fearful) of a person, who, though knowledgeable in Vedas, has not studied *Purāṇas* and *Itihāsas*, and so consider him to be an invader on them (i.e. Vedas consider such person to be an attacker on them, who is willing to interpret them without seeking assistance of *Purāṇas* and *Itihāsas*).”²

Evidence # 3 –

yo vidyāt caturo vedān sāṅgopaniṣado dvijaḥ / purāṇam ca vijānāti yaḥ sa tasmād vicakṣaṇaḥ //³

Rendition

¹ Mahābhārata, Ādi-parva 1.267 (former half) & Padma Purāṇa, Śṛṣṭi-khaṇḍa 2.51 (latter half)

² Mahābhārata, Ādi-parva 1.267 (latter half) & Padma Purāṇa, Śṛṣṭi-khaṇḍa 2.52 (former half)

³ Padma Purāṇa, Śṛṣṭi-khaṇḍa 2.50 (latter half) & 2.51 (former half)

“A person possessing erudition in *Purāṇas* is considered to be a greater scholar than a twice-born having a mere knowledge of Vedas, their corollaries, and *Upaniṣads*.”³

Evidence # 4 –

⁴atha vedārtha-nirṇāyakatvaṁ ca vaiṣṇave,

⁵***bhārata-vyapadeśena hy āmnāyārthaḥ pradarsītaḥ /*** ^[6]***vedāḥ pratiṣṭhitāḥ sarve purāṇe nātra saṁśayaḥ //*** ity-adau.

Rendition

⁴Furthermore, the *Itihāsas* and *Purāṇas* definitively explain the meaning of the Vedas, as the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* confirms in such verses as this: ⁵**“On the pretext of writing the Mahābhārata, Śrīla Vyāsa has revealed the meaning of the Vedas.”** ^[6]**All the Vedas have a firm foundation in the *Purāṇas*. Of this there is no doubt;”**etc.

Remarks by RKDB – **Hence, whatever assertions literature like Mahābhārata and Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam establish, they will be considered as actual imports of all the Vedas and śmṛtis. If any assertion of any smṛti or Veda etc. will be found as contradictory to the pronouncement of MB and SB, then they shall be treated as inferior or irrelevant evidence in the hierarchical process.**

Evidence # 5 –

⁷tad evam itihāsa-purāṇa-vicāra eva śreyān iti siddham. tatrāpi purāṇasyaiva garimā dṛśyate. uktaṁ hi nārādīye,

vedārthād adhikaṁ manye purāṇārthaṁ varānane / vedāḥ pratiṣṭhitāḥ sarve purāṇe nātra saṁśayaḥ //⁸

Rendition

⁹“Thus we have established that the best way to proceed is to examine the *Itihāsas* and *Purāṇas*. Moreover, there is evidence that of these two the *Purāṇas* are more important.

As stated in the Nārada Purāṇa, ⁸**“O lovely one, I consider the message of the Purāṇas more important than that of the Vedas. The Purāṇas provide a firm foundation for all the Vedas. Of this there is no doubt.”**

Remarks by RKDB – Hence, the description of the Vedic age can only be correctly found in the *Purāṇas* and *Itihāsas*, in clear contravention with the prima facie view # 1 of the antagonists.

³Padma Purāṇa, Sṛṣṭi-khaṇḍa 2.50 (latter half) & 2.51 (former half)

⁴Tattva-Sandarbhā, Anuccheda 15.4

⁵Viṣṇu Purāṇa

^[6]Nārādīya Purāṇa

⁷Tattva Sandarbha, Anuccheda 16.4

⁸Nārādīya Purāṇa

⁹Tattva Sandarbha, Anuccheda 16.4

Evidence # 6

¹⁰skānde prabhāsa-khaṇḍa,

**veda-van niścalaṁ manye purāṇārthaṁ dvijottamāḥ / vedāḥ pratiṣṭhitāḥ sarvepurāṇe nātra
saṁśayaḥ //**
bibhety alpa-śrutād vedo mām ayaṁ cālayiṣyati / itihāsa-purāṇais tu niścalo 'yaṁ kṛtaḥ purā //
yan na dṛṣṭaṁ hi vedeṣu tad dṛṣṭaṁ smṛtiṣu dvijāḥ / ubhayaṁ yan na dṛṣṭaṁ hi tat purāṇaiḥ pragīyate
//
yo veda caturo vedān sāṅgopaniṣado dvijāḥ / purāṇaṁ naiva jānāti na ca sa syād vicakṣaṇaḥ //¹¹
iti.

Rendition

¹⁰“And in the Prabhāsa-khaṇḍa of the Skanda Purāṇa we find this statement: ¹¹“**O best of brāhmaṇas, I consider the purport of the Purāṇas to be as incontestable as the Vedas themselves. The Purāṇas give a firm foundation to all the Vedas. Of this there is no doubt. Sometime in the past the Vedas feared, ‘These people, barely trained in proper hearing, will distort our meaning.’ But then the Itihāsas and Purāṇas came forward to give the Vedas an indisputable foundation. What cannot be found in the Vedas, O brāhmaṇas, is found in the smṛtis, and what cannot be seen in either is clearly described in the Purāṇas. O brāhmaṇas, one who knows the Vedas along with their supplements and the Upaniṣads but does not know the Purāṇas is not truly learned.”**”

Remarks by RKDB – Hence, the verdict of Purāṇas shall be considered final in comparison to the smṛtis and Vedas – their corollaries. But, how even among the various Purāṇas and indeed in the midst of Whole prasthāna-trayī i.e. aggregate corpus of smṛtis, śrutis, āgama, nigama, and darśanas, the verdict of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam stands foremost – shall be established henceforward in a synopsis.

Evidence # 7 –

18.1 *tad evaṁ sati tat-tat-kalpa-kathā-mayatvenaiva mātṛsya eva prasiddhānām tat-tat-purāṇānāmvavasthā jñāpitā.tāratamyāṁ tu katham syād yenetara-nirṇayaḥ kriyeta. sattvādi-tāratamyenaiveti cet,sattvāt sañjāyate jñānam¹²itisattvaṁ yad brahma-darśanam¹³iti ca nyāyāt sātṭvikam eva purāṇādikāṁ paramārtha-jñānāya prabalam ity āyātam.*

Rendition

“These being the facts, we can understand that the Purāṇas mentioned in the Matsya Purāṇa fall into natural categories according to the nature of the days of Brahmā of which each Purāṇa tells. But how can we define a hierarchy of these categories to determine which is superior? One suggestion is to rank them by their modes of nature—goodness, passion, and ignorance. We can then conclude that Purāṇas and other scriptures in the mode of goodness have the most authority to teach us about transcendental reality. This we may conclude by reasoning from such statements as **“From the mode of goodness knowledge develops”¹²** and **“In the mode of goodness one can realize the Absolute Truth.”¹³**”

¹⁰Tattva Sandarbha, Anuccheda 17.1

¹¹Skanda Purāṇa, Prabhāsa-Khaṇḍa, 3.121-124

¹²B.G. 14.17

¹³S.B. 1.2.24

18.2 *tathāpi paramārthe 'pi nānā-bhaṅgyā vipratipadyamānānām samādhānāya kiṁ syāt. yadisarvasyāpi vedasyapurāṇasya cārtha-nirṇayāya tenaiva śrī-bhagavatā vyāsenabrahma-sūtram kṛtaṁ tad-avalokenaiva sarvo 'rtho nirṇeya ity ucyate tarhi nānya-sūtra-kāra-muny-anugatair manyeta. kiṁ cātyanta-gūḍhārthānām alpākṣarāṇām tat-sūtrāṇām anyārthatvaṁ kaścīd ācakṣītatataḥ katarad ivātra samādhānam.*

Rendition

“Even so, is there a single standard that can reconcile all these *Purāṇas*, which discredit one another with divergent opinions even when speaking of the same Absolute Truth? Someone might suggest that the powerful saint Śrī Vyāsa wrote the Vedānta-sūtras to do just that: determine the purport of the entire Vedas and *Purāṇas*. Therefore, that person will say, one should ascertain the meaning of all these scriptures by referring to the Vedānta-sūtras. But then the followers of sages who wrote other *sūtras* will not respect our conclusions. Furthermore, some sages may interpret the terse, highly esoteric aphorisms of the Vedānta-sūtras in a way that distorts their meaning. What authority, then, can truly reconcile all this?”

18.3 *tad evaṁ samādheyamnyady ekatamam eva purāṇa-lakṣaṇam apauruṣeyaṁ śāstraṁ sarva-vedetiḥāsa-purāṇānām artha-sāraṁ brahma-sūtropajīvyam ca bhavad bhuvi sampūrṇam pracarad-rūpaṁ syāt. satyam uktam, yata eva ca sarva-pramāṇānām cakravartī-bhūtam asmad-abhimataṁ śrīmad-bhāgavatam evodbhāvitaṁ bhavatā.*

Rendition

“We would have the basis of such reconciliation, someone might comment, if there were one scripture that were to fit the definition of a *Purāṇa*, have *apauruṣeya* authority, contain the essential ideas of all the Vedas, *Itiḥāsas*, and *Purāṇas*, be faithful to the Brahma-sūtras, and be extant on earth in full. Well said, because you have called to mind the authority we most prefer: the emperor of *pramāṇas*, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.”

21.1 *gāruḍe ca,*

...pūrāṇaṁ so 'yam atīśayaḥ / artho 'yam brahma-sūtrāṇām bhāratārtha-vinirṇayaḥ //
gāyatrī-bhāṣya-rūpo 'sau vedārtha-paribṛhmītaḥ / purāṇānām sāma-rūpaḥ sākṣād bhagavatoditaḥ //

dvādaśa-skandha-yukto 'yam śata-viccheda-saṁyutaḥ / grantho 'ṣṭādaśa-sāhasraḥ śrīmad-bhāgavatābhīdhaḥ //

iti.

Rendition

“The Garuḍa Purāṇa states, “This is the most complete [of the Purāṇas]. It is the purport of the Vedānta-sūtras, it establishes the meaning of the Mahābhārata, it is a commentary on Gāyatrī, and it completes the message of the Vedas. Spoken directly by the Personality of Godhead, it is the Sāma Veda among the Purāṇas. With twelve cantos, hundreds of chapters, and eighteen thousand verses, this work is called Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.””

21.3 *bhāratārtha-vinirṇayaḥ,*
nirṇayaḥ sarva-śāstrāṇām bhārataṁ parikīrtitam //

bhārataṁ sarva-vedās ca tulām āropitāḥ purā /
devair brahmādibhiḥ sarvair ṛṣibhiś ca samanvitaiḥ //

***vyāsasyaivājñayā tatra tv atiricyata bhāratam /
mahattvād bhāra-vattvāc ca mahābhāratam ucyate //***¹⁴

ity-ādy-ukta-lakṣṇasya bhāratasyārtha-vinirṇayo yatra saḥ.

Rendition

“‘It establishes the meaning of the Mahābhārata’ indicates that ascertained within the Bhāgavatam is the meaning of the Mahābhārata, whose characteristics are stated as follows: **‘It is said that the Mahābhārata establishes the purport of all scriptures. Once long ago, Vyāsadeva made all the sages and the demigods, headed by Brahmā, place the Mahābhārata on one side of a scale and all the Vedas on the other. The Mahābhārata, they found, weighed more. Because it is so great [mahattvāt] and so weighty [bhāra-vattvāt], it is called the Mahābhārata.’**”¹⁴”

Remarks (by RKDB) – When Mahābhārata is greater in importance than all the Vedas, certainly Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is the even greater than Mahābhārata on the authority of the Garūḍa Purāṇa verse establishing S.B. as the decider of Mahābhārata’s actual purport.

22.2***vedārtha-paribṛmhitaḥ*** vedārthasya paribṛmhaṇam yasmāt.tac cuktam ***itihāsa-purāṇābhyāmity-***ādi.

Rendition

“‘Vedārtha-paribṛmhita’ means **‘by which the message of the Vedas are made complete,’** as expressed by statements such as **‘One should complete the Vedas with the Itihāsas and Purāṇas.’**”

Remarks (by RKDB) – It is transparently made clear in the above explanation of the verse of Garuḍa Purāṇa that S.B. make Vedas complete, without which Vedas and even Mahābhārata are incomplete.

Evidence # 8 – S.B. 1.1.2, S.B. 1.3.41, S.B. 1.3.43, S.B. 12.13.12, S.B. 12.13.15, are major evidences found within Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam substantiating the above mentioned facts.

Evidence # 9 –

rājño mokṣaṁ tathā vīkṣya purā dhātāpi vismitaḥ / satya-loke tulām baddhvātola yatsādhanānyajāḥ //

laghūnyanyāni jātāni gauraveṇa idaṁ mahat // tadhā ṛṣi-gaṇāḥ sarve vismayam paramam yayuḥ //¹⁵

Rendition

“Previously, Lord Brahmā was astonished to behold King Parīkṣit’s emancipation caused by the aural reception of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. For ascertaining reality, Lord Brahmā placed all other *sādhana*s (i.e. including paths like *karma*, *jñāna*, *yoga* etc., and also literatures like *Vedas*, *Purāṇas* etc.) on a weight balance. But, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam emerged as the weightiest in significance, while all other *sādhana*s came out to be lighter in importance. Beholding this scene, all the sages present were much surprised.”¹⁵

¹⁴M.B., Ādi-parva, 1.274

¹⁵Padma Purāṇa, Uttara-khaṇḍa, 189.18-19

Remarks (by RKDB) – The aforesaid citation from Padma Purāṇa establishes Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam’s par excellence in the whole Vedic corpus. Though, a similar verse was cited also in connection with Mahābhārata, but as we shall come across, S.B. will supersede the importance of Mahābhārata too.

Evidence # 10 –

hā-hā-kāro mahānāsīt trailokye vismayāvahaḥ / veda-vedānta-gḥoṣaiśca gītā-pāṭhaiḥ vibodhitam //

bhakti-jñāna-virāgāṇām nodatiṣṭhattribhaktikam yadā / upāyo nāparo ‘stīti karṇe karṇe ‘japañjanāḥ //¹⁶

Rendition

¹⁶“Upon beholding that despite the repeated recitations by Sage Nārada into the ear-holes of Jñāna and Vairāgya, the trio consisting of Bhaktidevī (the personified Goddess of devotional service) and Her sons Jñāna (*transcendental knowledge personified*), and Vairāgya (an embodiment of *yukā-vairāgya*) had not been awakened from their profound slumber and become rejuvenated, there was created a greatly tumultuous uproar emanating from high astonishment that filled all the three worlds. Living entities began to uproar that if there this trio is not made rejuvenated through Gītā, Vedas, and Vedānta (i.e. whole *prasthāna-trayī*), there exists no other means (*upāya*) for the trio’s emancipation from their desperate condition.”

Remarks (by RKDB) – Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā represents the *smārta-prasthāna*; whereas Vedānta Sūtra is an emblem of *naiyāyika-prasthāna* and Vedas including *Upaniṣads* stand for the *śrauta-prasthāna*. Thus whole *prasthāna-trayī* is incorporated in the recital of these three scriptures. Since, B.G. is part of M.B., S.B.’s paramount status is established over the whole *prasthāna-trayī* including the Vedas and M.B., as shall be exposed below.

nārada uvāca

veda-vedānta-gḥoṣaiśca gītā-pāṭhaiḥ prabodhitam / bhakti-jñāna-virāgāṇām nodatiṣṭhattribhaktikam yadā //

śrīmad-bhāgavatālāpāt tatkatham bodhameṣyati / tat-kathāsu tu vedārthaḥ śloke śloke pade pade //
chindantu samśayaṁ hyenaṁ bhavanto ‘mogha-darśanāḥ / vilambo nātra kartavyaḥ śaraṇāgata-
vatsalāḥ //¹⁷

Rendition

“Though I had made endeavour to awaken Bhaktidevī, Jñāna, and Vairāgya, it went into vain due to the failure of their rising. In such circumstances, how will they be made awakened through the recitation of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam? After all, every verse and phrase of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam contains the essence of the same Vedas, Vedānta and Gītā etc. (O Kumāras!) Your Holinesses are affectionate unto the surrendered ones and Your *dārśana* never goes futile. Therefore, I request You to kindly destroy my doubt (concerning S.B.’s par excellence) without any delay.”¹⁷

Remarks (by RKDB) – Some people, while accepting that S.B. is the essence of all Vedic literature, do not believe in the par excellence of S.B. on top of the Vedas etc. considering that S.B. contains the typical knowledge which is already found within the *prasthāna-trayī* and that S.B. is merely an

¹⁶Padma Purāṇa, Uttara-khaṇḍa, 190.39-40

¹⁷Padma Purāṇa, Uttara-khaṇḍa, 190.64-66

exposition on *prasthāna-trayī* without any autonomous unique feature; hence, they try to conclude that since S.B. is merely a commentary on *prasthāna-trayī*, the said *prasthāna-trayī* is considered more important than S.B. due to the comparative significance of a commented text as against its commentary. A great blow will be dealt with such heterodox doubters and contenders, as shall be seen below.

kūmārā ūcuḥ

vedopaniṣadāṁ sārājjātā bhāgavatī kathā / atyuttamā tato bhāti pṛthag-bhūtā phalākṛtiḥ //

āmūlāgraṁ rasastiṣṭhannāste na svādyate yathā / sa bhūyaḥ sampṛthagbhūtaḥ phale viśva-manoharaḥ //

yathā dugdhe sthitaṁ sarpirna svādāyopakalpate / pṛthag-bhūtaṁ hi tad-gavyaṁ devānāṁ rasa-varধানam //

ikṣūṇāmapi madhyāntaṁ śarkarā vyāpya tiṣṭhati / pṛthag-bhūtā ca sā miṣṭā tathā bhāgavatī kathā //

idaṁ bhāgavatam nāma purāṇam brahma-sammitam / bhakti-jñāna-virāgāṇāṁ sthāpanāya prakāśitam //

vedānta-veda-susnāte gītāyā api kartari / paritāpavati vyāse muhyatyajñāna-sāgare //

tadā tvayā purā proktaṁ catuśśloka-samanvitam / tadīya-śravaṇāt sadyo nirbādho bādarāyaṇaḥ //

*tatra te vismayaḥ kena yataḥ praśna-karo bhavān / śrīmad-bhāgavatam śravyaṁ śoka-duḥkha-vināśanam //*¹⁸

Rendition

“Though Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam has become manifest from the essence of Vedas and Upaniṣads in toto, it is greatly exalted and distinct from them (i.e. Vedas and Upaniṣads) due to its being their fruit. Just as a palatable juice remains permeated throughout the tree beginning with its roots and extending up to the branches and leaves, but still, it cannot be relished till when it transforms separately into a fruit and becomes favourite of the world. Similarly, the clarified butter (ghee) remains spread within the milk, but cannot be tasted distinctly till when it separately appears as ghee which is palatable even for the celestial demigods. Just as sugar remains pervaded throughout the sugarcane, but only turns more palatable when manifests distinctly, so also, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is of the same distinct significance (when compared with the Vedas etc.). This Bhāgavata Purāṇa is of the nature of Brahman i.e. Absolute Truth. Mahāmuni Vyāsadeva has revealed it for the proper establishment of *bhakti, jñāna, and vairāgya*. Previously, when Lord Vyāsadeva, the exhibitor of Bhagavad Gītā and full knower of Vedas and Vedānta, was distressfully immersed in the ocean of nescience (due to His internal dissatisfaction even after compiling Mahābhārata, other *Purāṇas*, Vedas, *Upaniṣads*, and Brahma-Sutra), Your Grace had uttered the same Śrīmad Bhāgavatam by the aural reception of which, Lord Vyāsa was freed from melancholy. If so, (O Nārada!) why you seem to be surprisingly baffled in this situation? You should make them (*bhakti, jñāna, and vairāgya*) listen to Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, which dispels moroseness and miseries.”¹⁸

¹⁸Padma Purāṇa, Uttara-khaṇḍa, 190.67-74

*bhaktiḥ sutau tau taruṇau gr̥hitvā premaika-rūpā shasā ‘virāsīt / śrī kṛṣṇa govinda hare murāre
nātheti nāmāni muhuḥ vadanti //*

*tām cāgatām bhāgavatārtha-bhūṣām sucāru-veṣām dadṛśuḥ sadasyāḥ / katham praviṣṭā
kathamāgateyaṁ madhye munīnāmiti tarkayantaḥ //*

*ūcuḥ kumārā vacanaṁ tadānīm kathārthato niṣpatitādhuneyaṁ / evaṁ giraḥ sā sasutā nīsamya
sanat-kumāraṁ nijagāda namrā //*

*bhaktiḥ uvāca
bhavadbhiradyaiva kṛtāsmi puṣṭā kali-praṇaṣṭāpi kathā-rasena¹⁹ /*

Rendition

¹⁹“On that spot, all of a sudden, Prema-bhakti Devī appeared accompanied by her two sons now turned youth and fresh. She was glorifying the names Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Govinda, Hare, Murāre, and Nātha etc. When the assembled sages saw Bhakti Devī adorned with beautiful garments of the nature of transcendental meanings of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, there arose a mutual debate among them as to how, why, and when she had arrived at spot. At that time, the Kumāras spoke, “This Bhakti Devi has just recently emerged out from the purport of Bhāgavata Purāṇa.” Hearing these statements, Bhakti Devī along with her progeny, spoke to the Kumāras while bowing down to them. Bhakti Devī said, “I had been almost destroyed in this Kali-yuga, but Your Holinesses have rejuvenated me again by the transcendental juicy mellows comprising the narration of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.””

Remarks (by RKDB) – It has been thoroughly substantiated after a prolonged analysis that Śrīmad Bhāgavatam is the literature par excellence in the midst of the whole Vedic cannon; because, what could not be done by the conjoint efforts of the *prasthāna-trayī*, was easily accomplished by Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam alone.

Evidence # 11 –

*svakīyaṁ yad bhavet tejaḥ tacca bhāgavate ‘dadhāt /
tirodhāya praviṣṭo ‘yaṁ śrīmad-bhāgavatārṇavaṁ //*

teneyaṁ vāñmayī murtiḥ pratakṣā vartate hareḥ /²⁰

Rendition

“(At the time of departure from mortal realm in Prabhāsa Tīrtha) Lord Kṛṣṇa invested His transcendental personal energy in Śrīmad Bhāgavatam and thus became unmanifest (from the mortal plane) by personally having entered into the ocean of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam. Hence, Śrīmad Bhāgavatam is the Supreme Lord directly appeared in an oral form.”²⁰

¹⁹Padma Purāṇa, Uttara-khaṇḍa, 191.67-70(½)

²⁰Padma Purāṇa, Uttara-khaṇḍa, 191.61 & ½

Evidence # 12 –

*dvādaśo ha vai puruṣaḥ.**

Rendition

“(The Vedas or *Śrutis* proclaim -) That *Puruṣa* (Supreme Lord) is indeed twelve-fold (i.e. this corroborates the fact that the Ādi-puruṣa or the primeval Lord Govinda has twelve limbs in His transcendental icon which is non-distinct from the twelve cantos of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*).*”

Evidence # 13 -

*pādau yadīyau prathamadvitīyau tṛtīyaturyau kathitau yadūru /
nābhistathā pañcama eva ṣaṣṭho bhujāntaram doryugalam tathānyau //*

*kaṇṭhas tu rājan navamo yadīyo mukhāravindam daśamam praphullam /
ekādaśo yasya lalāṭapaṭṭakamśiro'pi tu dvādaśa eva bhāti //*

*tamādididevam karuṇānidhānam tamālavarnam suhitāvatāram /
apārasaṁsāra samudra-setum bhajāmahe bhāgavata-svarūpam //*

Rendition

“I worship that Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the origin of all the gods, the abode of mercy, whose transcendental form is black like the *tamāla* tree, and who has appeared in the form of His sound incarnation, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. It is the literary incarnation of Kṛṣṇa, a bridge by which lost souls can cross the ocean of repeated birth and death. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* has twelve cantos, which correspond to the twelve different parts of Kṛṣṇa's divine form. The first two cantos are the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. The third and fourth cantos are His lotus thighs. The fifth canto is His lotus navel. The sixth canto is His torso and chest. The seventh and eight cantos are his lotus arms. The ninth canto is his throat. The tenth canto is his beautiful lotus face. The eleventh canto is His forehead, and the twelfth canto is His crown.”(Padma Purāṇa)

Gist of Conclusive Stand # 1- The antagonists' deviant line of thought propounding the four Vedas and their corollaries as the sole source of Vedic knowledge has been thoroughly refuted. Now, the notions i.e. *prameya-tattva* they have derived based on their faulty *pramāṇa-tattva* shall be analysed sequentially.

Thus ends the Conclusive Stand No. 1st.

Prima Facie Contention No. 2 – (BRD's & MAD's stand). Section 1.2 (Page # 2 of their paper) –

CREATED AS EQUAL HALVES

The *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka-upaniṣad* (1.4.3) contains the following passage —

* The cited *śruti-vākya* has been quoted numerous times by Śrī Vallabhācārya in his Subodhini commentary on S.B. to prove the non-distinction between S.B. & the Absolute Truth's icon.

sa dvitīyam aicchat. sa haitāvān āsa yathā strīpumāṁsau sampariṣvaktāu. sa imam evātmānam dvedhāpātayat. tataḥ patīś ca patnī cābhavatām. tasmād idam ardhabṛgalam iva sva iti ha smāha yājñavalkyaḥ.

He **(the Supreme Lord)** desired a partner. Assuming a form as great as the form of a man and woman combined, he divided this great form of himself and thus two equal parts fell, from which husbands and wives, respectively, were produced. Therefore, *Yājñavalkya* said that **both of us are like two equal halves of a shell.**

Conclusive Stand No. 2 – (RDKB’s View) – The *pūrva-pakṣins* i.e. antagonists have used the logic of creation of dual gender i.e. male and female equally from the same source i.e. Lord Brahmā’s body to establish equality in the social roles of the dual gender too. They have also misinterpreted Lord Brahmā’s creation as the creation done by the Supreme Lord i.e. Viṣṇu; this erroneous notion shall be analysed later. However, such a faulty logic based on the process of creation can never be applied to ascertain the prescribed duties of those dual gender. If so applied, the personified irreligion i.e. *adharmā* shall also become liable to be respected on the same status as *dharma* i.e. embodiment of religion. Why? Because, both *dharma* and *adharmā*, have been created from the counterparts i.e. front side and the back side of Lord Brahmā similar to the two equal halves of a shell which are also counter parts.

Evidence –

***dharmāḥ stanād dakṣiṇato yatra nārāyaṇaḥ svayam /
adharmāḥ prṣṭhato yasmān mṛtyur loka-bhayaṅkaraḥ //***

TRANSLATION

“Religion was manifested from the breast of Brahma, wherein is seated the Supreme Personality of Godhead Nārāyaṇa, and irreligion appeared from his back, where horrible death takes place for the living entity.”

>>> Ref. VedaBase => SB 3.12.25

Remarks contd. – If *dharma* and *adharmā* are not to be placed on an equal status due to their having risen from the two counter parts of Lord Brahmā i.e. rear and the front portions, then the creation of dual gender from the two counter parts i.e. halves of a shell also cannot be accepted as a criterion to equate the social positions of the said dual gender.

It is also erroneous to say that the Supreme Lord (implying to be Viṣṇu) desired a partner while translating the B.A.U. 1.4.3. Because S.B. clarifies that it was Lord Brahmā who had initially created the dual gender i.e. Manu and Śatarūpā from his body. Evidence –

***evam yukta-kṛtas tasya
daivam cāvekṣatas tadā
kasya rūpam abhūd dvedhā
yat kāyam abhicaḥṣate***

TRANSLATION

While he was thus absorbed in contemplation and was observing the supernatural power, two other forms were generated from his body. They are still celebrated as the body of Brahmā.

PURPORT

Two bodies came out from the body of Brahmā. One had a mustache, and the other had swollen breasts. No one can explain the source of their manifestation, and therefore until today they are known as the *kāyam*, or the body of Brahmā, with no indication of their relationship as his son or daughter.

SB 3.12.53

TEXT 53

***tābhyām rūpa-vibhāgābhyām
mithunaṁ samapadyata***

TRANSLATION

The two newly separated bodies united together in a sexual relationship.

SB 3.12.54

TEXT 54

TEXT

***yas tu tatra pumān so 'bhūn
manuḥ svāyambhuvaḥ svarāṭ
strī yāsīc chatarūpākhyā
mahiṣy asya mahātmanaḥ***

TRANSLATION

Out of them, the one who had the male form became known as the Manu named Svāyambhuva, and the woman became known as Śatarūpā, the queen of the great soul Manu.

SB 3.12.55

TEXT 55

***tadā mithuna-dharmeṇa
prajā hy edhām babhūvire***

TRANSLATION

Thereafter, by sex indulgence, they gradually increased generations of population one after another.

>>> Ref. VedaBase => SB 3.12.52-55

Remarks contd. – Even if it is accepted for the sake of argument that equality in creation of the dual gender establishes their mutual equality in social occupational roles also, then the said argument remains untenable because the S.B. 3.12.55 clarifies that the need of a female body was solely for the sake of progeny and not for any spiritual purpose. The desire of Lord Brahmā to enhance the material creation by producing dual gender is considered to be a wholly mundane desire (it is certainly a mundane desire; if not, the four Kumāras and Nārada would have agreed to procreate as per the order of Brahmā) and therefore, the so-called equality of the two genders as wrongly inferred from the B.A.U. 1.4.3. by the antagonists at most applies to the *pravṛtti-mārga* i.e. material *karmic* life and not to the *nivṛtti-mārga* i.e. the path of the spiritualists. Since, ISKCON devotees follow the *nivṛtti-mārga* (devotees follow *nivṛtti-mārga* because the *daiva-varṇāśrama-dharma* practiced by them is a spiritual occupation

and not mundane like the *jaḍa-varṇāśrama-dharma* of materialists i.e. *smārtas*), the equality stressed in the B.A.U. 1.4.3. cannot be accepted and applied.

In a higher philosophical sense, the requirement of female's association is deemed unessential for the progress of spiritual life and the same *Upaniṣads* proclaim this fact. Let us analyze.

Evidences –

I) B.A.U. 4.4.22 – *“etameva pravrajino lokamicchanto brahmaṇāḥ pravrajanti. etat ha sma vai tat pūrve vidvāmsaḥ prajāṁ na kāmāyante kiṁ prajāyā karṣyāmo yeṣāṁ no ‘yaṁātmāyaṁ loka iti. te ha sma putraiṣaṇyāśca vittaiṣaṇyāśca lokaiṣaṇyāśca vyutthāya atha bhikṣācaryāṁ caranti. yā hi eva putraiṣaṇā sā vittaiṣaṇā sā lokaiṣaṇā. ubhe he ete eṣaṇe eva bhavataḥ.”*

Rendition

“On realizing Him (i.e. the Absolute Truth), one becomes an ascetic (converting all his senses in culturing unalloyed devotion to Him). Desiring Him only as their resort, mendicants wander forth. Verily, because they know this, the ancient sages desired not off-springs saying, **“what shall we do with an off-spring of this insignificant world, as we have attained the Supreme Godhead.”** They, verily having risen above the desire for sons and the desire for wealth, desire for enjoyments of different worlds (of mundane and celestial) lived the life of a mendicant. For the desire for sons is the desire for wealth and the desire for wealth is the desire for the worlds – both these are indeed, desires only.”

II) B.A.U. 1.4.17 – *“prāg-dāra-parigrahāt puruṣa ātmā prākṛto dharma-jijñāsottarakālaṁ loka-traya-sādhanaṁ putram dvi-pakāraṁ ca vittaṁ mānuṣaṁ daivaṁ ca tatra mānuṣaṁ vittaṁ karma-rūpaṁ pītṛ-loka-prāpti-sādhanaṁ vidyāṁ ca daivaṁ vittaṁ deva-loka-prāpti-sādhanaṁ so ‘kāmayata.”*

Rendition

“A mundane living entity, after thoroughly having enquired in the matter of mundane religiosity and **before the occurrence of his marriage, started desiring a for a son i.e. instrumental in the attainment of the three higher planets and the two-fold wealth i.e. 1) celestial and 2) mortal.** *Karma*, through which the ancestral planets are attainable, are considered to be the mortal wealth; whereas, *vidyā*, through which the paradise is obtained, has been considered to be the celestial wealth.”

Remarks (by RKDB) – Herein, the term ‘*karma*’ refers to the mundane fruitive activities i.e. *karma-kāṇḍa*, whereas, the term ‘*vidyā*’ denotes the ‘*upāsana-kāṇḍa*’ or the worship of various demigods. Both of these paths are undertaken by the engrossed *jīvātmās*, who later on sought to the married life for fulfilling their mundane goals. This proves that the main goal of married life is to subtly or grossly fulfil the material desires and the basis of that married life is the wife i.e. who is a female (vide C.C. 1.15.27). Therefore, certain statements depicting equality of men and women during the creative process – only are meant for the mundane life or *pravṛtti-mārga*.

III) *loke vyavāyāmiṣa-madya-sevā nityā hi jantor na hi tatra codanā / vyavasthitis teṣu vivāha-yajña surā-grahair āśu nivṛttir iṣṭā //*

TRANSLATION

In this material world the conditioned soul is always inclined to sex, meat-eating and intoxication. Therefore religious scriptures never actually encourage such activities. **Although the scriptural**

injunctions provide for sex through sacred marriage, for meat-eating through sacrificial offerings and for intoxication through the acceptance of ritual cups of wine, **such ceremonies are meant for the ultimate purpose of renunciation.**

>>> Ref. VedaBase => SB 11.5.11

Remarks contd. – The desire for progeny cannot be fulfilled without copulation with female. The initial creation of female gender by Brahmā is also mundane as it is only required to fulfil the mundane desire of progeny. Hence, for those desiring spiritual progress i.e. *nivṛtti-mārgīs*, this so-called equality between two genders is not applicable.

Thus ends the Conclusive Stand No. 2nd.

Prima Facie Contention No. 3 – (BRD's & MAD's stand) – Section 1.3 (Page # 2 of their paper) –

EQUAL RIGHTS TO EDUCATION AND CELIBACY

Direct evidence supporting the equal right to education is found in the *Atharva-veda* (11.5.18) as follows,

brahmacaryeṇa kanyā yuvānaṁ vindate patim

Through *brahmacarya* a girl attains a suitable husband.

So what is this *brahmacarya*? *Sāyaṇa*, the most prominent commentator on all the four Vedas, comments on the above *Atharva-veda* section:

brahmacaryeṇa brahma vedaḥ tad-adhyayanārtham-ācaryam

The word *brahmacaryeṇa* means —by all efforts employed to study the Vedas in order to know Brahman||.

The *Śrīmad-bhāgavatam* speaks of two ladies attaining to complete Vedic knowledge:

***tebhyo dadhāra kanye dve vayunām dhāriṇīm svadhā
ubhe te brahma-vādīnyau jñāna-vijñāna-pārage***

Svadhā, who was offered to the *Pitās*, begot two daughters named *Vayunā* and *Dhāriṇī*, both of whom were impersonalists and were expert in transcendental and Vedic knowledge. (4.1.64)

Conclusive stand # 3 (RKDB's perspective) – *Sāyaṇācārya's* (a pure smārta) elucidation of the term *brahmacarya* belongs to the category of *yoga-rūḍha abhidhā-vṛtti* following the *mukta-pragrahā-vṛtti*. *Abhidhā-vṛtti* means the primary definition of a word as contrary to the *lakṣaṇā-vṛtti* and *vyañjanā-vṛtti* (these two indicate secondary meanings of a word). *Yoga-rūḍha* is defined as a term whose definition is derived both through its (that term's) *avayava-śakti* (strength of the individual inner constituent syllables of a term including vowels and consonants) and *samudāya-śakti* (strength of all the syllables

inclusive of vowels and consonants in aggregation) as opposed to the other three types viz., *rūḍha*, *yaugika*, and *yaugika-rūḍha*. Kindly refer to the Mahābhāṣya of Patañjali on Pāṇini's Aṣṭādhyāyī for more explanation as well as to the *Pūrva-mimāṃsā-śāstra*. *Mukta-pragrahā-vṛtti* is such a definition of term, which is allowed to growingly extend to its acme i.e. last limit as analogous to the untied horses' rapidest sojourn culminating far away from its origination esp. when such horses' reins are made let go. So, if the term *brahmacarya* is interpreted using the *yoga-rūḍha abhidhā-vṛtti* of *mukta-pragrahā* (i.e. concurrent mixture of the etymological and conventional meanings of a word allowed to fledge fully till its last limit) type, then *Sāyaṇa*'s interpretation is quite correct.

However, *Sāyaṇa*'s interpretation cannot always be applied to the term *brahmacarya*, because contextual considerations have to be emphasized, neglect of which can result in haphazard incongruent and irrational exposition. When, the first half part of the *mantra* found within the *brahmacārī-sūkta* of *Atharva-Veda-Saṁhitā* 11.5.18 is quoted in connection to an unmarried girl's celibacy, the term *brahmacarya* cannot be taken in *mukta-pragrahā-vṛtti* pertaining to the *yoga-rūḍha* category. Rather, the term shall be interpreted only in the *rūḍha* category with *abhidhā-vṛtti*. Then the term shall come out to mean "only celibacy" or "abstinence from sexual intercourse of eight types". Why such meaning should be taken recourse to while sidelining the definition of *Sāyaṇācārya*? Because, *Sāyaṇācārya*'s definition is a general and the most ideal definition of the said term and is inapplicable specifically in the verse quoted. We have to keep in mind that the whole *Brahmacārī-sūkta* contains the term *brahmacarya* exactly comes six times and each time it differs in meaning. How? Let us examine.

brahmacaryeṇa tapasā rājā rāṣṭraṁ virakṣati / ācāryo brahmacaryeṇa brahmacārīṇamicchate //
A.V.S. 11.5.17

Rendition

"A king protects his kingdom by practicing *brahmacarya* in the form of *tapasyā*. An *ācārya* also hankers after a *brahmacārī* who practices *brahmacarya*."

Note by RKD: In the first half of this verse, the term *brahmacarya* cannot mean full-fledged study of the Vedas, because, according to Nārada-Purāṇa, only those of *brahmaṇa* classification are allowed to study full Vedas. *Kṣatriyas* and *Vaiśyas* are not permitted to study all parts of the Vedas. A king is always a *kṣatriya* and so the most idealistic definition of *Sāyaṇa* fails to apply here again. Moreover, a *kṣatriya* king has already crossed his *brahmacaryāśrama* and is now placed in the *grihasthāśrama*. So, also the *Sāyaṇa*'s definition cannot be applied. However, if a king abiding the laws of *smritis*, only unites with his wife for the sake of progeny, then he is also considered to be an *upakurvāṇa brahmacārī* and such celibacy befitting household life is indicated here in the context of a *kṣatriya gr̥hastha* king.

In the latter half of this verse, the *Sāyaṇa*'s definition is fully applicable.

brahmacaryeṇa kanyā yuvānaṁ vindate patiṁ / anaḍvān brahmacaryeṇāśvo ghāsaṁ jigīṣati //
A.V.S. 11.5.18

Rendition

"Through the practice of *brahmacarya*, an unmarried virgin girl acquires a young and youthful husband. Through the practice of *brahmacarya* alone, an ox and a horse is able to eat the green grass."

Note by RKD: If we take the general definition of *Sāyaṇa*, we will not be able to interpret the second line of the above verse # 18. How can an ox and a horse be able to practice that most ideal form of *brahmacarya* which requires rigorous study of the Vedas and which ultimately produces knowledge of *Brahman*? Such activities are not possible in the animal species. Hence, *Sāyaṇa*'s idealistic meaning won't work in the immediate second half of this verse. For ox and horse, *brahmacarya* means only celibacy. Ox is a celibate, by the way, due to its genital castration. Based on SB 1.4.25, women were and are not allowed to study Vedas and so, *Vyāsadeva* had to compose Mahābhārata for them. Hence, in the first half of the above verse referring to a virgin girl, the term *brahmacarya* means merely "celibacy" or "virginity".

brahmacaryeṇa tapasā devā mṛtyumapāghnata / indro ha brahmacaryeṇa devebhyaḥ svarābharat //
A.V.S. 11.5.19

Rendition

"Through the practice of *brahmacarya* in the form of *tapasyā*, the demigods were able to wipe out the effects of death. *Indra* is able to pass down divine power to other sub-demigods by the practice of this *brahmacarya* alone."

Note by RKD: Demigods never undergo any formal *brahmacaryāśrama* like human beings of the upper three *varṇas*. Their *brahmacarya* is their penances that they perform to please Lord Viṣṇu. Because, only through the benediction of Lord Viṣṇu, can demigods be able to overcome death and thus be turned immortal. *Indra*'s *brahmacarya* also belongs to the same category as other demigods. Once again, the most idealistic definition of *Sāyaṇa*'s *brahmacarya* cannot be applied in this verse too.

Regarding SB 4.1.64, though commentators like Vīrarāghavācārya and Vijayadhvaja Tīrtha agree that those two daughters of Svadhādevī were *brahma-jñānīnīs* and had studied Vedas, their case cannot be applied to the mortal Earthly planet as they were not human beings, belonged to the Pitṛs. Pitṛs are considered half-demigods or *ardha-devatās* and **according to the explanation of Vyoma-Samhitā (shall be described later during the analysis of BRD's Paper, Page 15, Section 5.2) given by Madhvācārya, Jayatīrtha, and Jagannātha Yati, celestial beings like *devas*, *pitṛs*, *apsarās*, and sages of *ṛṣi* species as sages of human species are qualified to study Vedas based on the exceptional law. Otherwise, among regular human beings, only the males belonging to the upper three *varṇas* are deemed qualified for Vedic studies as per the normal law.**

Thus ends the Conclusive Stand No. 3rd.

Prima Facie Contention No. 4 (BRD's & MAD's stand) – Section 1.4 (Pages 2 & 3 of their draft) –

SOME HYMNS RESERVED FOR THEM

There are many hymns in the *Ṛg-veda* that are reserved for recitation only by women. An example (*Ṛg-veda* 10.159.1-2) speaks about a woman's qualification to speak on transcendental topics:

***ud asau sūryo agād ud ayaṁ māmako bhagaḥ
ahaṁ tad vidvalā patim abhy asākṣi viṣāsahīḥ
ahaṁ ketur ahaṁ mūrdhāhamugrā vivācanī***

mamed anu kratuṁ patih sehānāyā upācaret

Let my good fortune rise with the rising sun. May I attain my husband, defeat my enemies, and may I always be very tolerant. May I be an excellent knower of the Vedas, and a powerful speaker on the same. May my husband always be pleasing and behave tolerantly towards me.

Conclusive Stand No. 4 (RKDB's Perspective) – As elucidated in the commentaries of Jaya Tīrtha and Jagannātha Tīrtha, exceptional prerogative to study Vedas is reserved only for the celestial demigoddesses, nymphs, wives of the sages born in *ṛṣi*, *pitṛ*, and *ardha-deva* species, and some highly qualified wives of the sages born in human race such as the historical Gārgī, Vedavatī, and Maitreyī (wives of Yajñavalkya Muni and whose names are mentioned in the Upaniṣads) etc. **This law doesn't apply to ordinary mortal women of Kali-yuga especially. Even men are not qualified (though it is not prohibited for the males of the upper three *varṇas* to study Vedas in Kali-yuga) enough to properly comprehend the Vedic literature in Kali-yuga as explained by Jīva Gosvāmī in his Tattva-Sandarbhā, Anuccheda 12. Our view is also substantiated by S.B. 1.4.25 – the *vidhi-vākya*.**

Thus ends the Conclusive Stand No. 4th.

Prima Facie Contention No. 5 (BRD's & MAD's stand) – Section 1.5 (Page 3) –

TRANSMITTERS OF VEDIC KNOWLEDGE

In the *Bṛhad-devatā* (2.82) of *Śaunaka Ṛṣi*, the names of no less than twenty-six women who have contributed hymns to the Vedas are listed. This means that they have composed, practiced, taught, and initiated others in these hymns, for only the creator of a hymn or those coming in the creator's disciplic succession can initiate others. Many of these hymns can still be found today in the Vedas. The list of women is as follows,

***ghoṣā godhā viśvavārā apālopaniṣanniṣat*
brahma-jāyā juhūr-nāma agastyasya svasāditiḥ indrāṇī cendramātā ca saramā
romaśorvaśī
lopāmudrā ca nadyaś-ca yamī nārī ca śaśvatī
śrīr-lākṣā sārparājñī vāk-śraddhā medhā ca dakṣiṇā
*rātrī sūryā ca sāvitrī brahma-vāḍinya īritāḥ***

Ghoṣā, *Godhā*, *Viśvavārā*, *Apālā*, *Upaniṣat*, *Niṣat*, *Brahmajāyā* also known as *Juhū*, *Aditi* – the sister of *Agastya*, *Indrāṇī*, the Mother of *Indra*, *Saramā*, *Romaśā*, *Urvaśī*, *Lopāmudrā*, the river *Yamī*, the river *Nārī* and the river *Śaśvatī*, *Śrī*, *Lakṣā*, *Sārparājñī*, *Vāk*, *Śraddhā*, *Medhā*, *Dakṣiṇā*, *Rātrī* and *Sūryā* – also known as *Sāvitrī* – are famous as knowers of Brahman and are [the contributors of Vedic hymns].

Conclusive Stand No. 5 (RKDB's Perspective) – All the designations of ladies found in the above quotation belong to the *deva-patnīs*, *ṛṣi-patnīs*, and *ardha-devīs*. Some (those which are famous) of them can be identified as follows. Upaniṣat is the *Bhagavati Śruti*, the personified goddess of Upaniṣads. Aditi is the daughter of *dakṣa-prajāpati*, who is belongs to the *deva* species. Aditi is wife of Kaśyapa Muni and mother of all demigods. In one particular *manvantara*, she also appears as sister of Agastya

Muni. Indrāṇī is the wife of Lord Indra and is a *deva-patnī*. **Saramā is the chief pet she-dog (celestial dog species and not the mortal one) of Lord Indra – vide M.B. Ādi-parva, 3.1-11. This Saramā had power to curse the three younger brothers of King Janamejaya, the son of Parīkṣit.** Urvaśī is a nymph. Lopāmudrā is the wife of Agastya Muni. Yamī is Kālindī River Yamunā, the daughter of Sun God and sister of Saturn. Sāvitrī is the wife of Lord Brahmā. Rest are daughters of Dakṣa Prajāpati and *ardha-devīs*. Hence, the above citation by antagonists' cannot be applied to mortal women.

Thus ends the Conclusive Stand No. 5th.

Prima Facie Contention No. 6 (BRD's & MAD's stand) – Section 1.6 (Page 3 of their draft) –

ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE THE *GAYATRI* AND THE SACRED THREAD

The *Yama-smṛti* specifies the right of women to study Vedas and receive the thread,

***purā-kalpe tu nārīṇāṃ mauñjī-bandhanam-iṣyate
adhyāpanaṃ ca vedānāṃ sāvitrī vacanaṃ tathā***

Previously women were initiated with Brahmin threads and would teach the Vedas and acquire knowledge of the *Gāyatrī*.

Thus, there are quite a few places in the Vedas where women have been encouraged to teach and perform all kinds of sacrifices, including initiations.

Conclusive Stand No. 6 (RKDB's Perspective) – Yama Smṛti very clearly asserts that the privileges of mortal women to be initiated with brahmin threads and teach the Vedas were applicable traditions of the previous *kalpa*. The very phrase "***purā-kalpe tu***" i.e. "***But, in previous Kalpa***" implies the fact that such has not been the convention of the present *Śveta-vārāha-kalpa*, but was customarily prevalent in the previous *kalpa*. Since, the convention found in the above verse of Yama Smṛti is conditioned by the factor of time (i.e. it is conditioned to the previous *kalpa*), it is thoroughly illegitimate to make applicable and commence the same tradition in the present *kalpa*. Why? Just as the five activities were allowed in the previous three *yugas* viz., *satya*, *tretā*, and *dvāpara*, but are specifically prohibited to be followed in *Kali-yuga*, the convention pertaining to the previous *kalpa* is also not applicable in the current *kalpa* esp. after the clear cut prohibition of such convention for mortal women found in Manu-smṛti and S.B. 1.4.25.

Evidences –

***1) aśvamedhaṃ gavālabham sannyāsaṃ pala-paitṛkaṃ /
devareṇa sutotpattiṃ kalau pañca vivarjayet //***

TRANSLATION

"In this Age of *Kali*, five acts are forbidden: the offering of a horse in sacrifice, the offering of a cow in sacrifice, the acceptance of the order of *sannyāsa*, the offering of oblations of flesh to the forefathers, and a man's begetting children in his brother's wife.'

PURPORT

This is a quotation from the Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa (Kṛṣṇa-janma-khaṇḍa 185.180).

>>> Ref. VedaBase => Adi 17.164

Remarks contd. – A question arises as to why then the *sannyāsa* is still seen taken in *Kali-yuga* even in the authentic four *vaiṣṇava sampradāyas*? The reply is that actually, the *sannyāsa* referred to in the above quoted verse only includes the concept of *karma-sannyāsa* and *jñāna-sannyāsa*; it does not apply on the *vidvat-sannyāsa* also known as *bhakti-sannyāsa* undertaken by great *ācāryas* of Kali-yuga like Rāmānujācārya, Madhvācārya, and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu etc. But such exceptional precedents are nowhere to be seen in regards to allowing the mortal women to study the Vedas and making them adorned with a *brāhminical* thread. Contrarily, we find the injunctions of Manu-smṛti as follows:

II) “An unmarried girl, a youthful matron (i.e. a married woman or a widow), an unread *brāhmaṇa*, one of small learning, one afflicted with disease, or uninitiated with the sacred thread must not perform the *Agnihotra homa*. For having cast such libations in the fire, these (unmarried girl, a youthful matron, etc.) shall go to hell, together with the person on whose behalf they do such fire-offerings; hence (only) a *Brāhmaṇa* well versed in the Vedas and in the art of performing such fire-offerings, shall act as a *Hotā* (that is, submitter of the libation, or doer of the fire-offering.)” Manu Smṛti 11.36–37

And:

“A *Brāhmaṇa* must never eat (a dinner given) at a sacrifice that is offered by one who is not a *Śrotriya* (not well-versed in the Vedic rites), by one who sacrifices for a multitude of men, **by a woman, or by a eunuch**. When those persons offer sacrificial viands in the fire, it is unlucky for holy (men) it displeases the gods; let him therefore avoid it.” Manu Smṛti 4.205-206.

III) *amantrikā tu kāryeyam strīṇāmāvṛdaśeṣataḥ / saṁskārārthaṁ śarīrasya yathā-kālam yathā-kramam //*

vaivāhiko vidhiḥ strīṇām saṁskāro vaidikaḥ smṛtaḥ / pati-sevā gurau vāso gṛhārtho 'gni-parikriyā // - Manu-Smṛti 2.66-67

Rendition

"This whole series (of ceremonies) must be performed for females (also), in order to sanctify the body, at the proper time and in the proper order, but without (the recitation of) sacred texts. The nuptial ceremony is stated to be the Vedic sacrament for women (and to be equal to the initiation), serving the husband (equivalent to) the residence in (the house of the) teacher, and the household duties (the same) as the (daily) worship of the sacred fire." Manu.2.66- 67

Remarks (RKDB): Two things have been considered extremely forbidden by Manu for the women in these two verses. 1) They cannot wear sacred thread. If they were to wear sacred thread, then Manu would have clarified their position by saying that "Those women who don't have a sacred thread, only they are not permitted to do fire-sacrifice." On the other hand, Manu clarifies such a condition on the part of a male *brāhmaṇa*, by saying that: "An unread and uninitiated (uninitiated into the sacred thread) *brāhmaṇa* cannot perform sacrifice (which negatively implies that a fully scholar and sacred-thread holder *brāhmin* can perform the same)". Similarly, Manu would have given clarification about women also. But, he has kept all women in a general category and denied their rights for the performance of

yajña. 2) By not allowing women to perform *Agnihotra Yajña* (which is the most basic and commonly followed sacrifice to be performed by the *brahmins* - as considered in the Vedas), through the ‘upalakṣaṇa-nyāyaḥ’ or ‘the logic allowing the inclusion of similar objects of the same caliber and category’, the Manu has indicated that if women are not allowed to do the most basic *agnihotra* sacrifice, then they cannot be allowed to do any other Vedic sacrifice (*vaiṣṇava homa* of the Satkriyāsāradīpikā - which is compulsorily executed in ISKCON during the *dikṣā* ceremony - is also included as one of the Vedic sacrifices, because Satkriyāsāradīpikā is a ‘*Vaidikī Paddhati*’ or a ‘Vedic Manual of rites’ as will be shown later on by quotations). One thing to remember is that the sacred-thread is known in Vedas as: ‘*yajñīyopavīta*’ which is translated as: ‘that thread which makes its holder come nearer to the fire sacrifice or *yajña*’ (the term ‘*yajña*’ means ‘fire sacrifice’ and the term ‘*upavīta*’ means ‘to come nearer’). So, it is ascertained from the very literal definition of the term ‘*yajñīyopavīta*’, that it is this sacred thread which gives the eligibility to a male *brāhmin* to carry on the fire sacrifices. **Since, women cannot have sacred-thread, they can’t do the fire sacrifices, based on this logic, too. Neither can women bestow sacred-thread on others, since they do not possess it. Also, Satkriyā-sāradīpikā 16th and 17th sections dealing with *upanayanam* and *samāvartanam* ceremonies do not mention that women can be given *upanayanam*, but rather in their *upanayanam* sections, they only mention for a male child of the three *varṇas* (only the term *brahmacārī* has been used and not words like *brahmacārīṇī*, *kanyā*, or *strī* etc. which indicate women) as eligible for the sacred-thread ceremony which is in full compliance with SB 1.4.25 Purport by SP.**

Also, one another aspect to be considered herein is, that eunuchs have also been forbidden to perform the Vedic sacrifices and similarly, they also cannot wear the sacred thread. **Consequently, both eunuchoidism and feminism have no scope in the study of Vedas and related activities.**

III) SB 1.4. 25 - Commentaries by various *ācāryas* –

i) Vīrarāghavācārya of Rāmānuja Sampradāya says in his commentary to SB 1.4.25 as follows.

“*evam kṛtavatāvapi muninā vyāsena strīṇāṃ śūdrāṇāṃ ca dvija-bandhūnāṃ trai-varṇikābhāsānāṃ ca śruti-gocarā śravaṇaviśayaḥ trayī rgādi-bhinno vedaḥ na bhavati adhyayanasyopanayanāṅgatvādupanayanasya ca trai-varṇikāditvāt strī-śūdrādīnāṃ vedādhyayana-yogyatā nāsti.*”

Translation by RKD (since no previous rendition is available in English).

“Vedas having been composed in this way by Sage Vyāsa, they i.e. the three Vedas divided by Rg etc. do not become subject for the aural reception of the women, *śūdras*, and *dvija-bandhus* who are none other than the semblance of the upper three *varṇas* (*dvija-bandhus* are semblance of the upper *varṇas*). This is because the study of the Vedas is a limb of the *upanayanam-samskāra* and *upanayanam* is done only of the upper three *varṇas*. Whereas, the women, *śūdras* etc. do not undergo such procedure and hence are ineligible for the Vedic studies.”

iii) Vallabhācārya's Subodhinī commentary also shades great light on this verse. SP has accepted Vallabhācārya's commentary as bonafide and has inspired his disciples to study it - in the last paragraphs of His celebrated Bhaktivedānta Purports to SB 1.1.1. as follows. “Within the past five hundred years, many erudite scholars and *ācāryas* like Jīva Gosvāmī, Sanātana Gosvāmī, Viśvanātha Cakravartī, **Vallabhācārya**, and many other distinguished scholars even after the time of Lord Caitanya made elaborate commentaries on the Bhāgavatam. And the serious student would do well to attempt to go through them to better relish the transcendental messages.”

“yajña-dvārā hi vede strīṇāmupayogaḥ. avīra-vatīnām patiputrahīnānām tu tadabhāvāt trai-varṇika-strīṇāmapi veda-śravaṇa-niṣedhaḥ. śūdrāḥ svatantrāḥ na tu sevakāḥ. trai-varṇika-yājñika-sevakānām tadanna-bhakṣaṇena vedārthopayogināmāpātato veda-śravanasyāvaśyakatvāt. dvija-bandhavaḥ kuṇḍa-golakāḥ saṁskāra-rahitāśca. teṣāmapī śruti-śravane nādhikāraḥ.”

Rendition by RKD.

“Only through accompaniment in *yajñas*, the women are allowed. (Women accompany their *yajamāna* or host husbands in *yajña* as per the convention.) Those women who are without either husband or son or both (this means that even a divorced woman cannot sit in a fire sacrifice), are not allowed to sit in the *yajñas* as assisting host. The women belonging to the upper *varṇas* also cannot listen and study the Vedas. The *śūdras* (males are implied) mentioned in this verse are those who are independent but not those who are servants. However, those *śūdras* (males are implied) who are servants of the upper three *varṇas* and who survive on the grain of those *varṇas* are at least apparently/superficially eligible to hear the Vedas because they are essentials in the Vedic activities (*vedārthopayoginām*) (this implies to the face that those *śūdras* who are serving the upper *varṇas* by permanently staying in their houses will naturally assist their masters in the arrangement and completion of Vedic activities like *yajña* etc.). *Dvija-bandhūs* are those who have not undergone the purificatory processes. They are also not qualified to listen to Vedas.”

Note: Here Vallabhācārya clearly denies the rights of women of upper *varṇas* to study Vedas (automatically, the rights of women belonging to *śūdra* class are rejected). However, he doesn't deny the same rights to the *śūdras* (naturally implies male *śūdras*) who are serving their masters. This means that male *śūdras* are more fortunate than even the women of upper *varṇas*. He uses the word '*āpātato*' meaning superficial or apparently. This indicates that *śūdras* are at least eligible to hear the sound of Vedic recitation although not allowed for full-fledged study with meanings. This is because they are serving their masters and remain in their company. But for women, this is not so.

Furthermore, *smṛti* says "*śūdraścāṇḍālatām vrajet*" or that **“women and *śūdras* etc. attain the state of an outcaste dog-eater *cāṇḍāla* by hearing the Vedas.”** In Nṛsimha-tāpanī-upaniṣad (directly part of the Vedas and one of the important *upanisads*), it is said, "*sāvitrīm lakṣmīm yajuḥ praṇavaṁ yadi jānīyāt strī śūdraḥ sa mṛto 'dho gacchati. tasmāt sarvadā nācaṣṭe. yadyācaṣṭe sa ācāryastenaiva mṛto 'dho gacchati*" which means that **“if women and *śūdras* study the Vedas, they go to hell and therefore, they should not do it at any time. If any *ācārya* teaches them, then he also falls down.”**

The most important thing to note is that based on SB 1.4.25, if ladies were indeed qualified to study the Vedas, then Sage Vyāsa would not have written Mahābhārata. But, we see just opposite mentioned in the verse. There, it is said that Mahābhārata was written just to benefit the women and *śūdras* etc. **So, are we trying to say (if we accept the feminists' theories then we are bound to believe this) that Vyāsadeva did not know the fact that women are allowed to study the Vedas?**

iv) SB 1.4.25 - Bhaktivedānta Purport of ACBSP & its analysis

***strī-śūdra-dvija-bandhūnām trayī na śruti-gocarā /
karma-śreyasī mūḍhānām śreya evam bhaved iha /
iti bhāratam ākhyānam kṛpayā muninā kṛtam //***

SYNONYMS

strī -- the woman class; *śūdra* -- the labouring class; *dvija-bandhūnām* -- of the friends of the twice-born; *trayī* -- three; *na* -- not; *śruti-gocarā* -- for understanding; *karma* -- in activities; *śreyasi* -- in welfare; *mūḍhānām* -- of the fools; *śreyaḥ* -- supreme benefit; *evam* -- thus; *bhavet* -- achieved; *iha* -- by this; *iti* -- thus thinking; *bhāratam* -- the great Mahābhārata; *ākhyānam* -- historical facts; *kṛpayā* -- out of great mercy; *muninā* -- by the *muni*; *kṛtam* -- is completed.

TRANSLATION

Out of compassion, the great sage thought it wise that this would enable men to achieve the ultimate goal of life. Thus he compiled the great historical narration called the Mahābhārata for women, labourers and friends of the twice-born.

>>> Ref. VedaBase => SB 1.4.25

Remarks (by RKDB) contd. – Thus it has been proved that *purāṇas*, *pañcarātras*, and *itihāsas* (all counted as the fifth Veda) don't contain such restrictions on perusal as do the first four Vedas and because, the *upanayanam-saṁskāra* is a purely Vedic (here purely Vedic means that although the *purāṇas* and *pañcarātras* are also Vedic, the first four Vedas are conventionally famous by the term Vedic as compared to the fifth Veda; just like, Pāṇḍavas were Kauravas also in one sense, because Pāṇḍavas were the progeny of Kuru dynasty too; but still, the Pāṇḍavas are named separate from Kauravas or the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. Similarly, though *Purāṇas* and *Pañcarātras* are Vedas or *śrutis* in one sense, they are more popularly known as *smṛtis* and not *śrutis*.), it can't be bestowed upon women, *śūdras*, *dvija-bandhus*, *antyajas*, and *mleccha/yavanas* (here, categories like *śūdras*, *dvija-bandhus*, *antyajas*, and *mleccha/yavanas* - are all based on *guṇa*, *karma*, and *svabhāva*, and not on any stereotyped seminal birthright consideration; B.G. 4.13 & S.B. 7.11.35 should be referred to for further clarification. **Only the category of women is considered to be existing solely on the seminal birthright consideration, because you can't have a woman who is not a woman by birth, but only by guṇa and karma; this is not possible.**) Unto those who are born in *śūdra*, *antyaja*, *mleccha/yavana* or *dvija-bandhu* families, the sacred-thread and the brahma-gāyatrī mantra can only be bestowed, once they are purified by the *pāñcarātrika* process and attain *vipratva* or *brāhminical* qualification. But, women can never be considered worthy of wearing sacred thread and also for the performance of Vedic sacrifice, even after attaining *brāhminical* qualifications. Because, in the below quoted excerpts, SP is clearly proving the disqualification of women to undergo the sacred thread ceremony and this has been practically demonstrated by SP in the standards he set up in ISKCON (i.e. SP gave *brahma-gāyatrī* to women but not the sacred thread). Now the question is: "If women cannot undergo sacred thread ceremony, then *śūdras*, and *dvija bandhus* also cannot undergo. Then, if according to the *pāñcarātrika* process, the *śūdras* and *dvija-bandhus* are promoted to the status of wearing sacred thread (on the strength of the famous "*yathā kāñcanatām yāti ...*"etc. verse of Tattva Sāgara cited in H.B.V. 2.7), why can't the women be given the same benefits? The answer is: "**Categories like *śūdras* and *dvija-bandhus* lose their very status of being *dvija-bandhus* and *śūdras* as soon as they are elevated on the *brāhminical* platform. But, this is not the case with women. Can we consider a woman to have lost her '*strītvā*' or the '*womanhood*' once she acquires the *brāhminical* qualifications? No!** Therefore, in ISKCON, even though SP revolutionarily advocated the *brahma-gāyatrī* Vedic mantra to be given to women (this tradition was not there in Gauḍīya Maṭha) during the process of uplifting them onto the *semi-brāhminical* level by the simultaneous allotment of the other *pāñcarātrika* mantras, **still, these women were not considered fit by SP, to be given the sacred-thread.** Therefore, even after attaining *brāhminical* qualifications, the women were not deemed fit by SP to hold *brāhmin* thread - proves two facts: 1) Women never lose their '*strītvā*' or '*womanhood*' despite mounting on a *brāhminical* platform, unlike in the case of *śūdras*, *dvija-bandhus*, *antyajas*, and *mleccha/yavanas* who are all

males. 2) The second initiation (which according to SP, includes the full-fledged *upanayanam vaidika saṁskāra* as it is shown below in the quoted excerpts) for women is bereft of the sacred-thread ceremony or the *upanayanam*, but, only includes the *brahma-gāyatrī mantra* and the *pāñcaratrika mantras*. Hence, it can be concluded that the second initiation for women, according to SP, in ISKCON, is not fully fledged second initiation, but only partial second initiation, as it remains bereft of the sacred-thread ceremony, which, according to SP, is mandatory for the second initiation process to be considered fully-fledged. Now, since it is proved that the women are not entitled to receive full-fledged second initiation, how can it be considered that they can bestow a full-fledged second initiation onto their male disciples? [(The case of Sārādīyā and Vaiṣṇathanātha is an exceptional compelling situation where SP had to unwillingly break certain rules of the scriptures, as we also saw in the early days of SP's performance of fire-sacrifices for his *gr̥hastha* disciples to which he had regretted later on due to the inadvertent transgression of *sannyāsa-dharma* done by him during those rituals. **And if someone considers that only *Māyāvādī sannyāsīs* are not allowed to do *yajña*, but *vaiṣṇava sannyāsīs* are permitted to do so, then, why don't we see any Gauḍīya Maṭha or ISKCON *sannyāsī*, any Rāmānujī and Mādhva *sannyāsī* and even Śrīla Prabhupāda (after that his exceptional days were over) personally performing those sacrifices later on?]** Hence, in ISKCON, the women can be promoted to the *semi-brāhminical* level, but cannot be given the sacred thread. Therefore, they loose the right to bestow that sacred thread onto their male disciples. The fundamentals of this logic have also been used by Śrīla Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī in the 33rd paragraph of his *Saṁskāra Dīpikā* as thus:

"ataḥ svamata-samprāyi-sannyāsa-dharma-sādhyā-sādhana-anuṣṭhāna-aprājñasya sannyāsa-dharma-grahaṇa-saṁskāra-aprājñatvāt gr̥hī-guruṇā kṛtaḥ sannyāso nirastaḥ".

Simpler and concise translation (by RKDB): "(Śrīla Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī is making an ironic/sarcastic remark within the context of the *vaiṣṇava sannyāsa dīkṣā* process) Since a house-holder i.e. *gr̥hastha guru* is unaware of the experiences and laws governing the *sannyāsa* life, allotment of *sannyāsa* order by him, unto an aspiring *sannyāsa* candidate, has to be utterly rejected. **How can a *guru*, who himself has not undertaken the vows of *sannyāsa*, be considered fit to bestow that *sannyāsa*?**"

Remarks contd.: **If we apply the same logic here, in the context of female *dīkṣā gurus*, how can they (the female *gurus*), who themselves have not undergone the full-fledged spiritual second initiation, be considered fit to bestow that full-fledged second initiation (including the thread) onto their male disciples? Certainly not.**

Excerpts from the purport on the S.B. 1.4.25 verse by Śrīla Prabhupāda:

"The *dvija-bandhus* are classified with the *śūdras* and the woman class, who are by nature less intelligent. **The *śūdras* and the woman class do not have to undergo any *saṁskāra* save and except the ceremony of marriage. The less intelligent classes of men, namely women, *śūdras* and unqualified sons of the higher castes, are devoid of necessary qualifications to understand the purpose of the transcendental Vedas.** For them the Mahābhārata was prepared. The purpose of the Mahābhārata is to administer the purpose of the Vedas, and therefore within this Mahābhārata the summary Veda of Bhagavad-gītā is placed."

Remarks: It is clear from the mood of SP in the purport that women cannot undergo any *saṁskāra* except the *vivāha-saṁskāra* aka marriage. Now we will see how, according to SP, in the same purport, the *upanayanam-saṁskāra* or the sacred thread ceremony and the spiritual initiation (second initiation within ISKCON) are considered to be one and same.

Excerpt from the purport on the same verse by SP:

"The Garbhādhāna-saṁskāra is followed by other purificatory processes, out of which the sacred thread ceremony is one. **This is performed at the time of spiritual initiation. After this particular *saṁskāra*, one is rightly called twice-born.** One birth is calculated during the seed-giving *saṁskāra*, and the second birth is calculated at the time of spiritual initiation. One who has been able to undergo such important *saṁskāras* can be called a bona fide twice-born."

Note: *Upanayana-saṁskāra* or the sacred-thread ceremony doesn't include the mere allotment of the *brahma-gayātrī mantra*, but also the allotment of the sacred thread, without which the ceremony is incomplete.



Thus it has been proved that according to SP, both the *vaidika upanayanam saṁskāra* (sacred thread-giving ceremony) and the spiritual *vaiṣṇava* initiation (second initiation) are one and the same and mutually inclusive. Since, women are not given the sacred thread as per the current tradition, they have not been given a full-fledged *upanayanam saṁskāra* but only a partial *upanayanam saṁskāra* (only the *brahma-gāyatrī* is given to women) and therefore, their 2nd initiation is also partial.

Similarly, in the same Saṁskāradīpikā, Śrīla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī advocates only limited life-long *brahmacharya-āśrama* for the women and not the full-fledged *sannyāsa-āśrama* as we can understand from the 21st and 22nd paragraphs:

"evaṁ prakāreṇa śrī-haribhaktivilāsa-kṛdbhiḥ śrī-śālagrāma-sevanādaḥ dattādhikāriṇāṁ madhye strīṇāṁ api kaupīnāṁ vinā sampradāyī vaiṣṇava-karaṇa-suvijñyena gurunā-datta-bahirvāsavad-bheka-aṅgabhūta-cīra-khaṇḍa-yugma-vasana-ādi-dhāraṇena brahmacaryya-ādi-āśrama-ādikam-avirodha-siddham-iti. yathā śrī-mahāprabhoḥ pārśadasya śrī dāmodarasya śikhā-sūtra-tyāgena kaupīna-dhāraṇena ca kintu yoga-paṭṭam vinā sannyāseṇa svarūpākhyā abhūt. Yathā śrī mādhavī vaiṣṇavī api iti. evaṁ śrīmān nityānandena prabhuṇā syavameva śrī-raghunāthadāsagosvāmine kaupīnādikam dattam iti."

Translation (done by RKDB):

"Thus (as earlier mentioned in the same Samskāra Dīpikā i.e. the attainment of *brāhminical* qualification through the *pāñcarātri* process), according to the author of Hari-bhakti-vilāsa, among those who have been given the eligibility for the worship of Śālagrāma-śilā, the women can also undoubtedly fulfill the vow of life-long celibacy (*vaidika-naiṣṭhika-brahmacharya-āśrama*) by wearing two pieces of cloth (one should be the loin-cloth and other should be the upper cloth covering the chest) allotted by a (renounced) guru (not *grhī-guru*) who is an adept in implementing the *vaiṣṇava* traditions and *siddhānta* of the particular *sampradāya* (*sampradāyī-vaiṣṇava-karaṇa-suvijñyena guruṇā*). But, this process of wearing two cloths on the body (for women celibates) should not include the wearing ("*kaupīnāṁ vinā*") of the special undergarments worn by a traditional male *sannyāsī* and/or a male *naiṣṭhika brahmacārī*. Just like Śrīla Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī, the internal associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who had taken *sannyāsa* without wearing the special '*yoga-paṭṭa*' cloth (*yoga-paṭṭa* is considered mandatory for a traditional *vaidika sannyāsī*) ("*yoga-pattam vinaa*"), merely by adorning himself with a "*kaupīna*", having relinquished both the '*śikhā*' or sacred pony tail and the '*sūtra*' or the sacred thread. Thus, he came to be renowned by the title of '*śvarūpa*'. (Note: This title is given to saffron wearing *brahmacārīs* belonging to the *Śāṅkara* lineage Maṭha in Dvārakā. Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī had taken only life-long

brahmacarya āśrama and not the full-fledged *sannyāsa-āśrama* and that also from the *Śāṅkara* lineage Maṭṭha of the Dvārakā-pīṭham and therefore, he had renounced *śikhā* and *sūtra*.) Śrīmatī Mādhavīdevī (who is the sister of Śikhī Māhiti and is considered half among the 3 and 1/2 associates of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu as per the dictum of C.C.; **even though she was a *nitya-siddha-rāgaṭmika-parikara* both in Kṛṣṇa-līlā and in Gaura-līlā, still, she was counted as half in the enumeration due to her being in the female body. If so, how can the *sādhaka* women be allotted a full-fledged *varṇa* status. Hence, women, though having undergone the second initiation, cannot be considered to be full *brāhmaṇas*.**) had also undertaken similar life-long *brahmacarya-āśrama*. In the same way, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu also gave only '*kaupīna*' and the '*bahirvāsa*' to Śrī Raghunāthadāsa Gosvāmī (and not the *yoga-paṭṭa* which indicates the true sign of *sannyāsa*)." Relevant corresponding verses can be read at: C.C. 2.10.108 and C.C. 3.2.104-106.

Remarks contd. – Hence, it is proved that just like the women aspiring candidates for *sannyāsa/naiṣṭhika-brahmacarya-āśrama* - can never wear either '*kaupīna*' and/or the '*yoga-paṭṭa*' in the same way, women can only have *brahma-gāyatrī mantra* as a sign of having acquired *semi-brāhminical* qualification and not the actual sacred thread or the *yajñopavīta*. Because, giving sacred thread to women will be considered transgression of the established tradition. We should also remember that the Thākuraṅgis and Gosvāmīnīs of the historical Gauḍīya Parivāras were not possessing and bestowing *brahma-gayatri mantra* nor the sacred thread, but only the *pañcarātrika dīkṣā* as mentioned in the Saṁskāra Dīpikā; whereas, in ISKCON, we have a mixture both the *pañcarātrika* process and the purely Vedic process during the second initiation esp. of males.

Thus ends the Conclusive Stand No. 6th.

Prima Facie Contention No. 7 (BRD's & MAD's stand) – Section 2 (Pages 4 & 5 of their draft) –

JAIMINI AND ĀTISAYANA

Jaimini is the renowned composer of the literature known as *Pūrva-mīmāṃsā sūtras*. According to the *Śrīmad-bhāgavatam* (1.4.21), he is the professor of the *Sāma-veda* and the direct disciple of Vyasadeva.

Jaimini's *Pūrva-mīmāṃsā sūtras* have been referred to by many *ācāryas* in their works, e.g. Srila Jiva Goswami in his *Kṛṣṇa-sandarbha* and Srila Baladeva Vidyabhushan in his *Govinda-bhāṣya*. Both these *ācāryas* quote *Pūrva-mīmāṃsā sūtras* as a valid and acceptable authority.

As Jaimini was compiling the *Pūrva-mīmāṃsā sūtras*, he wished to tackle the case of equal rights for women in all sacrifices (including *dīkṣā*). He was well aware of the school of a certain sage named Ātisayana, who had declared that all these sacrifices were only for the higher three classes and not for women and *sūdras*. Jaimini discussed this issue in the first chapter of the sixth part of his *Pūrva-mīmāṃsā sūtras*. The famous Vedic commentator Shabara-swami commented on these *sūtras*. We are reproducing here the entire section along with the commentary of Shabara-swami.

The entire discussion revolves around the word *svarga-kāmaḥ* in the following aphorism in the *Śruti* —

darśa-pūrṇa-māsābhyāṁ svarga-kāmo yajeta (Āpastambha *Śrauta Sūtra* 3.9.4)

One who desires heaven should perform the *Darśa* and *Pūrṇa-māsa* sacrifices.

Jaimini in the *Pūrva-mīmāṁsā sūtras* (6.1.3.6) presents the view of the opposite party (*pūrva-pakṣa*) first,

liṅga-viśeṣa-nirdeśāt puṁ-yuktaṁ-aitiśāyanaḥ (*Sūtra* 6)

The Sage Aitisayana says that since the gender used in the aphorism is masculine (*svarga-kāmaḥ*), therefore only males are eligible.

Commentary: *darśa-pūrṇa-māsābhyāṁ svarga-kāmo yajetetyevam-ādi samāmnāyate. tatra sandeḥaḥ. kiṁ svarga-kāmaṁ puṁāṁsam-adhikṛtya yajetety-eṣa śabda uccaritaḥ? atha vā'niyamaḥ striyaṁ puṁāṁsam ca? iti. kiṁ prāptam? puṁ-liṅgam-adhikṛtaṁ mene aitiśāyanaḥ. kutah? liṅga-viśeṣa-nirdeśāt. puṁ-liṅgena viśeṣeṇa nirdeśo bhavati, svarga-kāmo yajeteti. tasmāt puṁān-ukto yajeteti, na strī.*

Translation of Commentary: The aphorism ‘One who desires heaven should perform the *Darśa* and *Pūrṇa-māsa* sacrifices’ is seen in the Vedas. In that there is a doubt. Is the aphorism recited keeping in mind only a male, or both male and female? The sage Aitiśāyana says that only males are eligible. Why? It is because the masculine gender has been specified in the word *svarga-kāmaḥ* in the aphorism. This word refers to a man, and therefore only men are allowed, and not women.

Jaimini then gives his conclusion:

jātiṁ tu bādarāyaṇo 'viśeṣāt tasmāt strī api pratīyeta jāty arthasyāviśiṣṭatvāt (*Sūtra* 8)

Vyasa, however, says that both ladies and men belonging to the upper three classes are fit for all sacrifices, as there is no distinction of class between males and females in the word *svarga-kāmaḥ*.

Commentary: *tu-śabdaḥ pakṣaṁ vyāvartayati. naitadasti puṁso 'dhikāra iti. jātiṁ tu bādarāyaṇo 'dhikṛtāṁ manyate sma āha. kim-ayaṁ svarga-kāma iti jāti-śabdaḥ samadhigataḥ? netyāha. katham tarhi? yaugikaḥ, svargēcchā-yogena vartate. kena tarhi śabdena jāti-uktā yā adhikṛteti gamyate. nava ca vayaṁ brūmo jātivacana iha śabdo 'dhikāraka iti. kiṁ tarhi? svarga-kāma śabdenobhāva 'pi strī-puṁsāvadhī kriyate iti. ato na vilakṣitaṁ puṁ-liṅgaṁ iti. kutah? aviśeṣāt. na hi śaknoty-eṣa vibhaktiḥ svarga-kāmaṁ liṅgena viśiṣṭum. katham? lakṣaṇatvena śravaṇāt. svarge kāmo yasya tam-eva lakṣayati śabdaḥ. tena lakṣaṇenādhikṛto yajeteti śabdena ucyate. tatra lakṣaṇam-aviśiṣṭaṁ striyāṁ puṁsi ca. tasmāc-chabdenobhāva 'pi strī-puṁsāv-adhikṛtāv-iti gamyate. tatra kenādhikāraḥ striyā nivartyate? vibhaktyā iti cet. tan-na. kasmāt? puṁ-vacanatvāt. strī-nivṛttāv-aśaktiḥ. puṁso vibhaktyā punar-vacanam-anarthakam-iti ced na. ānarthakyo 'pi strī-nivṛtter-abhāvaḥ. paraśaṅkhyāyāṁ svārtha-hāniḥ. parārtha-kalpanā prāpta-bādhaś ca. na cānarthakyaṁ. nirdeśārthatvāt. tasmāt strī api pratīyeta jāty arthasyāviśiṣṭatvāt.*

Translation of Commentary: By the word *tu* in this *sūtra*, the *pūrva-pakṣa* is refuted. It is not that only males have the right. Those belonging to the upper three classes, whether men or women, are bonafide, as said by Vyasadeva. A question is to be asked here. Is the word *svarga-kāmaḥ* to be considered as a word which defines a group or as a word which points to a single person? The other party says, —It cannot point to a group, because the way in which it is grammatically formed points only to a single person, and that also a male. ||

However, we (the *uttara-pakṣa*) say that the word *svarga-kāmaḥ* cannot refer only to a male. Why? Because of its non-speciality. The word cannot be restricted only to the male species because it emphasizes eligibility over gender. The emphasis is on the fact that —One who desires heaven should perform sacrifices. || The rightful performers of the sacrifice are indicated by the word *yajet*. If it is said that the word *svarga-kāmaḥ* is of masculine gender by rules of grammar, then we (the *uttara-pakṣa*) say that it is not so, for assuming that only males are indicated will lead to the following problem:

The purpose of the word *svarga-kāmaḥ* is to state that whosoever desires to go to heaven should perform the sacrifices. Since it is a well-observed fact that even women desire heaven, if the purpose of the original aphorism was to state that only men should perform the sacrifices then the language would have had to include specific wording to state that it did not apply to women.

Therefore, women are also included in the three higher *varṇas* that can perform sacrifices. Thus, in the opinion of Vyasadeva, even women are eligible to perform all sacrifices. Later commentators also give the example that the statement *brāhmaṇo na hantavyaḥ* — a *brāhmaṇa* should never be killed — also includes a *brāhmaṇī*. This shows that even though male species may be indicated in an aphorism, it often includes females.

Moreover, the original *sūtra* contained the name of a sacrifice, *Pūrṇa-māsa*. Ladies who performed these sacrifices are thus rightfully known as *Paurṇa-māsī*.

Conclusive Stand No. 7 (RKDB's Perspective) – Though our *ācāryas* like Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī and Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa have at times quoted from the *Pūrva-mimāṃsā-sūtras* (P.M.S.) of Jaimini in their writings, not always he has been taken to substantiate their claims but rather to refute his stand too. As we shall analyze later in this section, on numerous occasions in *Vedānta Sūtra*, Vyāsadeva has differed to a great extent from Jaimini's views. **Hence, Jaimini cannot be taken for granted as an absolute authority in all matters.**

As critically analyzed during the critically elaborate rebuttal of Prima Facie Contention # 1, Āpastamba Śrauta Sūtra and all other Vedic corollaries have to be interpreted and examined on the strength of *smṛtis* (primary among which is Manu Smṛti), *itihāsas* (primary in the midst of which is Mahābhārata), and *purāṇas* (chief among which is S.B.). And if there is found any apparently mutual inconsistency prevalent between the trio of *smṛtis*, *itihāsas*, and *purāṇas*, then the authority of S.B. should stand the foremost at least for the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas.

Once so established, Jaimini's and Śabarāsvāmī's (i.e. Śabarāsvāmī was a *non-vaiṣṇava smārta*) prolong argumentative analysis, which apparently seems correct, suffers the blow of incongruence with the proposition of S.B. 1.4.25 and hence loses value. As previously analyzed, S.B. 1.4.25 rejects the eligibility of mortal women to study the Vedas and their corollaries. The same conclusion has been

ācāryas like Śrī Vīrarāghavācārya and Śrī Vallabhācārya. Śrīla Prabhupāda also confirms the same along with Śrī Madhvācārya, Śrī Jaya Tīrtha Muni, and Śrī Jagannātha Yati. Consequently, Jaimini's conclusively faulty analysis of A.S.S. 3.9.4. cannot be accepted by the followers of Mahāprabhu.

If according to S.B. 1.4.25, ladies and labour class men cannot be bestowed *upanayanam saṁskāra* without which they are ineligible to study the Vedas, how can the same women and *śūdras* (i.e. *śūdras* according to *guṇa*, *karma*, and *svabhāva*; whereas, women according to their very birth as elucidated earlier) be considered eligible to perform the ritualistic rites propounded in those Vedas and their ancillary literature like A.S.S. etc.? Certainly not.

Jaimini has mentioned Bādarāyaṇa i.e. Vyāsadeva in his P.M.S. 6.1.3.8 (quoted above by antagonists) as follows to erroneously substantiate his (Jaimini's) stand of establishing the feminine rights for the performance of Vedic rites in an independent way i.e. Jaimini and his commentator Śabarasvāmī are both of the opinion that females belonging to three upper three classes (*varṇas*) are allowed to execute Vedic rituals independently as the males of upper three classes are entitled to perform. However, Vyāsa has been misquoted by Jaimini. Why? Because, as Vallabhācārya explained in his commentary to S.B. 1.4.25 (quoted earlier by us), women are only allowed to secondarily participate in the *yajñas* and other Vedic rituals as the assistant of the main *yajamāna* i.e. the main host i.e. either her husband or her son. If a woman is '*avīravatī*' meaning she is devoid of either husband or son, she cannot take part in any Vedic ritual. If we mistakenly take Jaimini's and Śabarasvāmī's claims to establish independent feminine rights for the performance of Vedic rituals, then S.B. 1.4.25's *vidhi-vākya* by Vyāsadeva will be nullified. Hence, Jaimini and Śabarasvāmī have erroneously interpreted Bādarāyaṇa Vyāsadeva in P.M.S. 6.1.3.8 without penetrating into the actual conclusion of Vyāsa as depicted in S.B. 1.4.25.

As to the later anonymous commentators on the P.M.S. who claim that the male species indicated in Vedic aphorisms is automatically inclusive of female gender, our reply is that the example of "***brāhmaṇo na hantavyaḥ***" they (i.e. those later commentators) quote to include ***brāhmaṇīs*** through inference is a quite wrongly applied concept. Why? Because when the killing of both the whole feminine class in general and the *brāhmaṇas* (i.e. males) has been strictly prohibited in a mutually separated concurrent enumeration as a sinful activity by the injunctions of *smṛtis*, *purāṇas*, *śrutis*, and especially Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 6.2.9-10, how then can it be speculated that the term '*brāhmaṇo*' implies to '*brāhmaṇīs*' also? If the term '*brāhmaṇo*' did imply to '*brāhmaṇīs*' also, then the killing of women class should not have been listed separately from the killing of a (male) *brāhmaṇa*. But we find it otherwise in S.B. 6.2.9-10 thus establishing the concocted interpretation of the later commentators on P.M.S. as totally bogus.

Evidence – (from S.B. 6.2.9-10) –

stenaḥ surā-po mitra-dhruḡbrahma-hā guru-talpa-gaḥ / strī-rāja-pitr-go-hant'aye ca pātakino 'pare //

>>> Ref. VedaBase => SB 6.2.9

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam Lectures

"One who is unfaithful to his friends, *mitra-dhruk*; *brahma-hā*, one who has killed a *brāhmaṇa* or a *Vaiṣṇava*, *brahma-hā*. And *guru-talpa-gaḥ*: and one who has dishonored a spiritual master or teacher. *Strī-rāja-pitr-go-hantā*, one who has killed a woman, one who has killed a king, and one who has killed a cow. These are all the severest type of sinful activities."

Lecture on SB 6.2.9-10 -- Allahabad, January 15, 1971:

So the assistants of Yamarāja charged that "This man was throughout his whole life a sinful man. Therefore he is punishable and we must take him to the Yamarāja." And the Viṣṇudūtas protested that "Even though he was sinful throughout his whole life, because he once uttered the holy name of Nārāyaṇa some way or other—it doesn't matter—therefore he is now free from all reaction of sinful life." And he has spoken that there are different kinds of sinful life, and he has described some of them. *Stenaḥ*. *Stenaḥ* means stealing, thieves, burglars. They are very sinful. *Stenaḥ*; *surā-paḥ*, drunkard, intoxicant, those who are addicted to intoxication. So stealing and drinking, these are the honorable occupations of the moralist. But they are condemned by the Yamarāja..., by the Viṣṇu... *Stenaḥ surā-po mitra-dhruk* (SB 6.2.9). **One who is unfaithful to his friends, *mitra-dhruk*; *brahma-hā*, one who has killed a *brāhmaṇa* or a *Vaiṣṇava*, *brahma-hā*. And *guru-talpa-gaḥ*: and one who has dishonoured a spiritual master or teacher. *Strī-rāja-pitr-go-hantā*, one who has killed a woman, one who has killed a king, and one who has killed a cow. These are all the severest type of sinful activities. *Ye ca pātakino 'pare*. Some of the sinful activities are mentioned here. And besides these sinful activities, there are other, many.**

Thus ends the quoted evidence.

As to the antagonists' assertion that the female performers of Darśa-pūrṇa-māsa sacrifice (the sacrifice which bestows paradise) are allotted the conventional designation of '*Paurṇa-māsī*', we have serious objections. The opponents are desirous of establishing the rights of common mortal women (i.e. they have a covetous intention of applying the exceptional rule to the normal rule) to perform such sacrifices, but as explained in the earlier cited commentaries of Jaya Tīrtha etc., only highly qualified *ṛṣi-patnīs* of yore were entitled to such rights. Such being the case, we only come across extremely scarce *purāṇic* and Vedic cases of such mortal women who have had performed such *yajñas* in the Vedic ages. The only famous case to be recorded is that of the Bhagavatī Paurṇamāsī Devī i.e. mother of Sage Sāṇḍīpani who acts as *yoga-māyā* in the *prakaṭa-līlā* (i.e. manifest pastimes) of Lord Kṛṣṇa as depicted in Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's *Vidagdha-mādhava-nāṭaka* numerous times.

Why Jaimini cannot be taken as an authority for granted? Because, Jamini, after being a direct disciple of Vyāsadeva and the appointed *ācārya* of Sāma Veda, shares following grave differences of opinion and interpretation with Vyāsadeva in the evidences as shown below –

I) Govinda Bhāṣya

"atha yāsu vidyāsu devā evopāśyāstāsu teṣāmadhikāraḥ syānna veti vicāryate. chāndogye (3.1.1.) "asau vā ādityo deva-madhu tasya daureva tiraścina-varṁśa" ityādinā sūryasya deva-madhutvaṁ pratipādyate raśmīnāṁ chidratvaṁ ca tatra vasurudrāditya-marut-sādhyāḥ pañca-deva-gaṇāḥ svamukhyena mukhenāmṛtaṁ dṛṣṭvaiva tṛpyantītyādi cocyate. sūryasya madhutvaṁ ca rgādi-prokta-karma-niṣpādyasya raśmī-dvārā prāptasya rasasyāśrayatayā vyapadiśyante. evamanyatrāpyanya-devopāsanā ca grāhyā. tatra tāvatparamatamāha."

Translated Purport of Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa

"Now will be considered the question of whether the *devas* are eligible or not to engage in those meditations where they themselves are the object of meditation. In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad (3.1.1) is the statement *asau vā ādityo deva-madhu tasya dyaus eva tiraścina-varṁśaḥ* (The sun is honey for the

devas. The heavenly planets are the crossbeam, the sky is the beehive, and the rays of sunlight are the children). The sun is here the honey of the *devas* and the rays of sunlight are the openings (for drinking the honey). Five classes of *devas*, the *vasus*, *rudras*, *ādityas*, *maruts*, and *sādhya*s, all headed by their leaders, gaze at the honey of the sun and become happy. That is said here. The sun is here called honey because it is the abode of a certain sweetness one becomes eligible for by performing certain religious works described in the Ṛg Veda and one attains by entering through the doorway of the sun's rays. In other places in the scriptures it is said that the *devas* can perform these meditations. In this matter he now explains the opinions of others."

V.S. 1.3.31 (Bhāvādhikaraṇam)

madhv-ādiṣv asambhavād anadhikāraṁ jaiminiḥ

madhu-ādiṣu - in madhu-vidyā and other Vedic meditations; *asambhavāt* - because of impossibility; *anadhikāraṁ* - qualification; *jaiminiḥ* - Jaimini.

Rendition

"Jaimini says the *devas* do not engage in *madhu-vidyā* and other forms of Vedic meditation because it is not possible for them to do so."

Govinda Bhāṣya

"jaiminiḥ devānāṁ madhvādiṣu vidyāṣvanadhikāraṁ manyate. kutaḥ asambhavāt. na hi svayamupāsyaḥ sannupāsako bhavitumarhati ekasminnubhayāsambhavāt vasutvādi-prapṭer-madhu-vidyā-phalasya siddhatvenārthitvāsambhavācca."

Translated Purport of Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa

"Jaimini Muni thinks that the *devas* are not qualified to engage in *madhu-vidyā* and other forms of Vedic meditation. Why? The *sūtra* says *asambhavāt* (because it is not possible for them to do so). The object of worship cannot also be the worshiper. It is not possible for one person to be both. Furthermore, because the *devas* do not aspire to attain the result of *madhu-vidyā* meditation, namely to become *vasus* or exalted *devas*, because they already are *vasus* and *devas*."

Sūtra 32

jyotiṣi bhāvāc ca

jyotiṣi - in the splendor; *bhāvāt* - because of existence; *ca* - and.

Rendition

"And because the *devas* do meditate on the effulgent Supreme Personality of Godhead."

Govinda Bhāṣya

"“tad-devā jyotiṣāṁ jyotiḥ” (B.A.U. 4.4.16) ityādi-śruter-jyotiṣi parasmīn brahmaṇi teṣāṁupāsakatayā bhāvācca na tāsavadhikāraḥ. brahmopāsanasya deva-manuṣya-sādhāraṇye ‘pi viśiṣya devānāṁ tat-kathanāṁ teṣāmitaropāsana-nivṛttim dyotayati."

Translated Purport of Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa

“The Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad (4.4.16) says

tad **devā jyotiṣāṁ jyotiḥ** (the *devas* meditate on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the light of all lights). Because the *devas* do meditate on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is described in this passage from the *śruti* as the supreme effulgence, they naturally do not engage in the *madhu-vidyā* and other inferior meditations. The explanation that the *devas*, as well as the human beings, naturally engage in meditation on the Supreme Personality of Godhead shows that the *devas* are averse to any other kind of meditation. “

Govinda Bhāṣya

“*evaṁ prāpte bravīti.*”

Translation of the Purport by Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa

“Now that this view has been expressed, he (Vyāsa) gives his opinion.”

Sūtra 33

bhāvaṁ tu bādarāyaṇo 'sti hi

bhāvaṁ - existence; *tu* - but; *bādarāyaṇaḥ* - Vyāsadeva; *asti* - is; *hi* - because.

Rendition

“Vyāsadeva says the *devas* do engage in these meditations.”

Govinda Bhāṣya

“*tu śankācchedārthaḥ. tāṣvapi madhvādiṣūpāsanāsu bhāvaṁ devādhikārasya bhagavān bādarāyaṇo manyate. hi yasmādāditya-vasvādīnāmapī satāṁ svāvastha-brahmopāsanayā sva-bhāvāpti-pūrvaka-brahma-lipsā sambhavo 'sti. kārya-kāraṇobhayāvastha-brahmopāsanasyātrāvagamāt. idānīmāditya-vasvādayaḥ santaḥ svāvastha-brahmopāsīnāḥ kalpāntare 'pyādityādayo bhūtvā ādityādyantaryāmi-kāraṇabhūtaṁ brahmopāsyā muktāḥ santas-tad-gaṁṣyantīti bhāvaḥ. na cādityādi-śabdānāṁ brahma-paryantatve mānābhāvaḥ. “ya eta maivaṁ brahmaupaniṣadam veda” (Ch. U. 3.11.3) ityupa-samhārasya mānatvāt. na ca vidyā-phalasya vasutvādi-prapteḥ. siddhatvādarthitvā sambhavaḥ. loke putrīṇāmeva satāṁ janmāntare putra-lipsā-darśanāt. evaṁ ca brahmaṇa evopāsyatvāt “tad-devā jyotiṣāṁ jyotiḥ” (B.A.U. 4.4.16) ityapi sūpapannam. “prajāpatirakāmayata prajāyeyeti sa etadagni-hotraṁ mithunamapaśyat. tadudite sūryo 'juhot.” Iti. “devā vai satramāsata” ityādi śrutyantara-siddhaḥ karmādhikāraśca teṣāṁ na virudhyate. loka-saṅgrahārthayā bhagavadājñayā tat-karaṇāt. nanu madhu-vidyādi-śālināmaneka-kalpa-paryantaṁ vilambaṁ sahiṣṇūnāṁ kathaṁ mumukṣutvaṁ brahma-lokānta-sukha-vaitrṣṇyatattvāt satyam. tad-bodhaka-śāstrādadṛṣṭa-vaicitryasya niyāmakatvācca tādṛśaḥ kecidadhikāriṇaḥ sambhavantīti svīkāryam. idamadhikaraṇam pūrvārthe kaimutya-dyotanāya.*”

Translated Purport of Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa

“The word *tu* (but) is used here to dispel doubt. Lord Vyāsa thinks the *devas* are able to engage in *madhu-vidyā* and other kinds of Vedic meditation. The word *hi* (because) here implies "desiring to again become *devas* and *ādityas*, they worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead as the archetypal *deva* and *āditya*."

Because of this worship they develop a desire to gain the company of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In this way it is possible for them to engage in the *madhu-vidyā* and other Vedic meditations." This is so because it is understood that the worship of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is both the goal and the means of attaining the goal.

They who are now *vasus*, *ādityas*, and other kinds of *devas* meditate on the Supreme Personality of Godhead as the archetypal *vasu* and *āditya*. At the end of the *kalpa* they become *vasus* and *ādityas* and engage in the meditation and worship of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the Supersoul in their hearts, and who is the cause of their becoming *vasus* and *ādityas* again. As a result of this worship they will eventually become liberated.

The words *āditya*, *vasu*, and the names of the other *devas*, are all also names of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is confirmed by the words ***ya etam evaṁ brahmopaniṣadam veda*** (He who understands this Upaniṣad describing the Supreme Personality of Godhead) at the end of the Upaniṣad.

It is not that because the *devas* have already attained their exalted positions therefore they have no desire to become *devas* and therefore have no interest in attaining the results of Vedic meditation. This is so because it is seen in this world that many people, even though they already have sons in this lifetime, yearn to again have sons in the next life. Furthermore, because they are actually meditations on the Supreme Personality of Godhead the *madhu-vidyā* meditations of the *devas* are described in the words of the Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad (4.4.16) ***tad devā jyotiṣāṁ jyotir*** (The *devas* meditate on the Supreme Personality of Godhead).

The scriptures say ***prajāpatir akāmayata prajāyeyeti sa etad agnihotraṁ mithunam apaśyat. tad udite sūrye 'juhot.*** (The demigod Brahmā desired: "Let me create children." He then saw two *agni-hotra* sacrifices. When the sun rose he performed *agni-hotra* sacrifices). The scriptures also say ***devā vai śātram āsata*** (the *devas* then performed a Vedic sacrifice). These and other passages from the scriptures show that the *śruti* does not disagree with the idea that the *devas* are able to perform Vedic sacrifices. They perform these sacrifices by the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in order to protect the material world.

Now someone may object: They who perform the *madhu-vidyā* and other Vedic meditations must wait many *kalpas* before they attain liberation. How is it possible for one who yearns for liberation to tolerate such a delay? They who yearn for liberation do not desire to enjoy any material happiness, even the happiness of *Brahmaloka*.

The answer is given: This is true. Still, the scriptures explain that because of certain unknown past actions some persons voluntarily postpone their personal liberation to take up the duties of administering the affairs of the material world. This *adhikaraṇa* (i.e. sub-section of Vedānta Sūtra) shows that because even the *devas* perform the ordinary Vedic duties, how much more so should human beings perform these duties."

II)***śabdo na yatra puru-kāraṇavān kriyārtho***.....

śabdaḥ -- speculative sound; *na* -- not; *yatra* -- where there is; *puru-kāṛakavān* -- resulting in fruitive action; *kriyā-arthaḥ* -- for the matter of sacrifice;

TRANSLATION

What is realized as the Absolute *Brahman* is full of unlimited bliss without grief. That is certainly the ultimate phase of the supreme enjoyer, the Personality of Godhead. He is eternally void of all disturbances and fearless. He is complete consciousness as opposed to matter. Uncontaminated and without distinctions, He is the principle primeval cause of all causes and effects, **in whom there is no sacrifice for fruitive activities** and in whom the illusory energy does not stand.

>>> Ref. VedaBase => SB 2.7.47

Ṭīkā-kāra-gaṇera Tātparya

1. Bhagavatārka-marīci-mālā - by Bhaktivinoda Thākura
2. Amṛta-pravāha-bhāṣya - by Bhaktivinoda Thākura
3. Viśvanātha
4. Kavirāja
5. **Śrī-Jīva**
6. Śrīdhara
7. Madhva
8. Vijayadhva
9. Vīrarāghava
10. **Siddhānta-pradīpa**
11. **Vallabha**
12. Vivṛti

Note (by RKDB) – Since, Bhaktivinoda Thākura and Kavirāja Gosvāmī have not composed formal commentaries on S.B. either in *Bāṅglā* or in *Sanskṛt*, among the hierarchy of commentators specifically on S.B., the Siddhānta Pradīpa *Sanskṛt* commentary by Śukādevācārya of Nimbārka Sampradāya stands on the seventh rank and Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī's Krama Sandarbha *Sanskṛt* commentary on S.B. stands on the second level. SP has quoted many times from the Siddhānta Pradīpa in his Bhaktivedānta Purports to S.B.

Now the commentaries on S.B. 2.7.47 by Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī and Śrī Śukādevācārya shall be reproduced below.

i) Krama Sandarbha – “***yatra kriyādayo yajñādyarthaḥ purukāṛakavān na śabdo pravarttata ityarthaḥ. kintvaupaniṣadam puruṣamityādirītyā kevalamupaniṣadeva prakāśikā bhavatītyarthaḥ.***”

Rendition

“In whom (in the personality of Absolute Truth or *Para-brahman*) the Vedic passages (i.e. *śabda*) depicting the ritualistic procedures of fruitive fire sacrifices (i.e. *karma-kāṇḍa-paraka-veda-vākya*) do not exist (i.e. the Absolute Truth cannot be attained by following such Vedic statements which inspire the performance of fruitive sacrifices). But the Absolute Truth, who is propounded by the last part of the Vedas i.e. *śrūtis* or *upaniṣads*, can be attained by those same *upaniṣads* only (i.e. through the *brahma-vidyā* or the spiritual knowledge of the *upaniṣads* only the *Para-brahman* is obtainable).”

Note (by RKDB) – Vedic sacrifices can be executed either as an offering to please Lord Viṣṇu without possessing any fruitive desires or with the aim of fulfilling mundane volition. But Brahman is not to be attained by following such Vedic passages which incite the performer to do fruitive sacrifices. Rather, He is achieved by the contemplation on such Vedic passages which illustrate the *svārūpa* or the nature of that Absolute Truth i.e. the spiritual knowledge of the *Upaniṣads*. When Jīva Gosvāmī says that only through *upaniṣads* Brahman is obtainable, it means that among the four Vedas and its corollaries only *upaniṣads* are relevant for fulfilling this task and not that the relevance of other scriptures like *purāṇas* and *itihāsas* gets destroyed.

ii) Siddhānta Pradīpa – “*āmnāyasya kriyārthatvamiti jaimini-mataṁ ca nirākaroti śaśvaditi dvayena.*”

Rendition

“Jaimini only accepts those Vedic passages as relevant which instruct their readers to become engaged in the performance of Vedic fruitive rituals. **But here, (in the current verse of S.B. 2.7.47) the said opinion of Jaimini is thoroughly refuted by the verse commencing from śaśvat etc. i.e. the whole verse.** (According to the Pūrva-mimāṃsā of Jaimini, *Upaniṣads* and those other portions of Vedas which do not give ritualistic instructions, but only portray the nature of the Absolute Truth, are considered to be irrelevant portions of the Vedas because such passages are without any fruit or aim. Jaimini considers that only the ritualistic activities i.e. *krīyā* or *karma* prescribed in the Vedas have a prefixed goal or fruit to be attained, whereas the *jñāna* or *brahma-vidyā* i.e. the spiritual knowledge of *Para-brahman* cannot bestow produce any result because it is not an activity or *kriyā*. Only actions produce result and not the knowledge.)”

Thus ends the Conclusive Stand No. 7th.

Prima Facie Contention No. 8 (BRD’s & MAD’s stand) – Section No. 3.1 (Page 6th of their draft) –

MANU-SAMHITA

Srila Prabhupada often quoted the following selections from *Manu-saṁhitā*:

na strī svātantryam-arhati (9.3)

Women should not be given independence.

And also,

pravṛttir eṣa bhūtānām nivṛttis tu mahā-phalaḥ (5.56)

Everyone in material life is attracted to furthering the way of attachment (*pravṛtti-mārga*), but the greatest treasure is to be gained by following the path of detachment (*nivṛtti-mārga*).

However, Srila Prabhupada did not always support the conclusions of this literature:

Yes, but we do not keep him *sūdra*. A devotee is no longer *sūdra*. We are creating *brāhmaṇas*. Just like these Europeans and Americans. They, according to *Manu-saṁhitā*, are *mlecchas*, *yavanas*. But we are

not keeping them *mlecchas* and *yavanas*. Just like these European and American boys. They are accepting the Vedic regulative principles: no illicit sex, no meat-eating, no intoxication, no gambling. So they are no more *śūdras* or *caṇḍālas*. They are *brāhmaṇas*. (Room Conversation, 5 June 1974.)

According to the *Manu-saṁhitā* you are all *mlecchas* and *yavanas*. You cannot touch the *Manu-saṁhitā*, what to speak of translating it. So if you try to follow the *Manu-saṁhitā* then you become a *mleccha* and *yavana* and your career is finished. (Secretary's letter to Madhusudana, 19 May 1977.)

Conclusive Stand No. 8 (RKDB's Perspective) –

The said contenders have cited SP's letter to Madhusūdana dated 19th of May 1977 to prove the inefficacy and irrelevance of Manu-smṛti for the western devotees, at least according to SP's apparent stand. However, it is to be noted here that the same SP has also corroborated the dictums of Manu Saṁhitā 9.3 & 5.56 (i.e. **cited by the contenders above to substantiate the theme of everlasting subordination of the female gender to the male gender** and the analysis of *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti mārgas*). Therefore, it is to be concluded that only certain passages of Manu-smṛti are to be considered inapplicable for the ISKCON devotees to be followed, whereas, other portions of the same text are to be abided by. SP doesn't discount the notion of *strī-dharma* which acts as one of the fundamentals in *varṇāśrama-dharma*. The notions of Manu-smṛti that SP dismisses is the one which makes the classification of the four *varṇas* and *āśramas* based on the seminal birthright conception and the consequent exclusion of the *mlecchas*, *yavanas*, outcastes etc. from the *varṇāśrama* system too. There are assertions to be found in Manu-smṛti which classify the *varṇāśrama* principle on the seminal system of perverted castes and the rejection of *mlecchas* etc. into such a structure. Only such assertions have been refused acceptance by SP in the above cited letter to his disciple. Why such statements of Manu-smṛti have been rejected belief by SP? Because of the below mentioned double reasons.

1) If we accept such propositions of Manu-saṁhitā to be the original part of the text, then also, due to the contradiction of such passages with the final verdict of Mahābhārata and Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, they appear to loose value (because the *itihāsas* and *purāṇas* are stronger in hierarchical authority than the smṛtis as shown earlier). Evidences -

(i) ***“yasya yallakṣṇaṁ proktaṁ puṁso varṇābhivyañjakam / yadanyatrāpi dṛśyeta tat tenaiva vinirdīśet //”*** (S.B. 7.11.35)

Rendition

“If one shows the symptoms of being a *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya*, *vaiśya* or *śūdra*, as described above, even if he has appeared in a different class, he should be accepted according to those symptoms of classification.” (Taken from B.B.T. Translation)

>>> Ref. VedaBase => SB 7.11.35

(ii) ***“kirāta-hūṇa-āndhra-pulinda-pulkaśā-ābhīra-śumbhā-yavanāḥ-khasādayaḥ / ye 'nye ca pāpā yad-apāśrayāśrayāḥ śudhyanti tasmai prabha-viśṇave namaḥ //”***

Rendition

“Kīrāta, Hūṇa, Āṇdhra, Pulinda, Pulkaśa, Ābhīra, Śumbha, Yavana, members of the Khasa races and even others addicted to sinful acts can be purified by taking shelter of the devotees of the Lord, due to His being the supreme power. I beg to offer my respectful obeisances unto Him.”

>>> Ref. VedaBase => SB 2.4.18

(iii) **“yan-nāmadheya-śravaṇānukīrtanād yat-prahvaṇād yat-smaraṇād api kvacit / śvādo ‘pi sadyaḥ savanāya kalpate kutaḥ punaste bhagavan nu darśanāt //”**

Rendition

To say nothing of the spiritual advancement of persons who see the Supreme Person face to face, even a person born in a family of dog-eaters immediately becomes eligible to perform Vedic sacrifices if he once utters the holy name of the Supreme Personality of Godhead or chants about Him, hears about His pastimes, offers Him obeisances or even remembers Him.

>>> Ref. VedaBase => SB 3.33.6

(iv) **“śūdra caitad bhavellakṣaṇaṁ dvije tacca na vidyate / na vai śūdro bhavecchūdro brāhmaṇo brāhmaṇo na ca //”** (M.B. 8.189.8)

Rendition

“In those born in the family of *śūdras* (where rest of the family is *śūdra* according to *guṇa*, *karma* and *svabhāva*), if the attributes pertaining to the *brāhmaṇa varṇa* are seen prevalent, whereas in those born in the family of *brāhmaṇas*, the characteristics of the *śūdra varṇa* are seen existing, then the said *śūdra* is not a *śūdra* and the said *brāhmaṇa* is not a *brāhmaṇa*.”

(v) **“na viśeṣo ‘sti varṇānām sarvaṁ brāhmamidaṁ jagat / brahmaṇā pūrva-sṛṣṭaṁ hi karmbhiḥ varṇatām gatam //”** (M.B. 1.188.10)

Rendition

“Previously there was no categorization of the four *varṇas* among the human beings because the whole world created by Lord Brahmā was full only with the *brāhmaṇas*. Later on, the *varṇas* were divided according to the various actions (*karma*).

Remarks (RKDB) contd. – 2) But in actuality, such passages of Manu-smṛti as rejected by SP are to be certainly considered as interpolations into the text. Because, a scripture of the status of Manu-smṛti can never contradict the fundamental principles of Vedic dharma, which rather seem contradicted in the certain texts of interpolated Manu-smṛti available nowadays. As for example, there is found a clear cut injunction in Mahābhārata, other *purāṇas* and Vedas about the prohibition of the consumption of cow beef. But, if certain versions of Manu-smṛti do seem to permit consumption of cow beef, what else is to be thought of except for the certain possibilities of interpolation. Since, two of the most authentic scriptures of Vedic literature viz., M.B. and S.B. clearly contradict Manu-smṛti’s certain views on *mlecchas* etc., such passages are interpolations for sure. Also, the same Manu-smṛti also contains mutually contradictory passages wherein, the classification of *śūdras* etc. is found based on actions and nature as par the instruction of B.G. 4.13. For this reason too, the inconsistent views of Manu-smṛti on *mlecchas* etc. are no doubt annexations inserted in the later period as BVT and SBSST also have remarked in their writings.

But, contrastingly to the above analysis, when SP supports the dictum of Manu-smṛti regarding women's dependence and subordination to men, how can such a text be considered either interpolated or irrelevant (as what the said contenders are trying to establish) esp. when the same principle is also found substantiated in M.B. and in S.B. 7.11.25 (See Appendix 10.4 of our draft)? **Hence, the fallacious effort of the contenders to show the irrelevance of Manu-smṛti cannot withstand our conclusive analysis, since their own citations from Manu-smṛti accepted by SP contradict what they try to prove (i.e. they try to prove the social equality of both genders) and their citations from Manu-smṛti not accepted by SP (those citations about the rejection of *mlecchas* from the *varnāśrama* structure have nothing to do with the notion of the equality of the two genders) do not establish what they try to establish.**

Thus ends the Conclusive Stand No. 8th.

Prima Facie Contention No. 9 (BRD's & MAD's stand) – Section No. 3.2 (Pages 6th & 7th of their draft) –

CONTRADICTIONS

Manu-saṁhitā says different things about women. Sometimes its thrust is to speak highly of them:

***prajanārthaṁ mahā-bhāgāḥ pūjārḥā gṛha-dīptayaḥ* (9.26)**

Women are to be worshipped. They are extremely auspicious. They are the illuminators of the home.

***yatra nāryastu pūjyante ramante tatra devatāḥ
yatra itāstu na pūjyante sarvās-tatrāphalāḥ kriyāḥ* (3.56)**

Wherever women are worshipped, the demigods reside, and wherever they are not worshiped, all activities end in failure.

While some other sections speak derogatorily:

***paum̐ścalyāc cala cittāc ca naisnehyāc ca svabhāvataḥ* (9.15)**

Women are by nature adulterous, fickle-hearted, and devoid of all love.

***nirindriyā hy amantrās ca striyo 'nṛtam iti sthitiḥ* (9.18)**

Women are to be considered as devoid of all sense, devoid of all mantras, and full of falsity. 7

Sometimes we even find both kinds of statements in the same chapter — Chapter 9. No statement is offered directly in *Manu-saṁhitā* that resolves this incongruity.

Conclusive Stand No. 9 (RKDB's Perspective) – None of the apparently contradictory statements cited by the said contenders above, can be considered to be interpolations as what the said contenders are desirous of establishing. Why? Because, such statements have to be interpreted in a proper perspective.

Just because Manu-saṁhitā itself does not solve this apparent incongruence does not give rise to the possibility of interpolation on those cited verses. Because, if statements speaking derogatory of women are taken to be interpolations, then even certain passages of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam and Śrīmad Bhāgavatam also have to be considered as interpolations. Such passages found in S.B. and B.G. seem to more or less equate the social position of women (esp. belonging to the upper two *varṇas*) with the *śūdras*, outcastes, and *yavanas* of lower and sinful birth. The commentaries of all *ācāryas* on such passages also claim the social position of women to be of lower, sinful, and unholy birth (It is a different issue that the women also get purified and attend the transcendental status; **but even after obtaining a transcendental status of a devotee, women are not allowed to reject their subordinate *strī-dharma* as evident in the Appendix 10.4 of our draft; even the great *nitya-siddha* women found in *gaura-līlā* like Mālātī Devī, Sītā Thākuraṇī, and Mother Śācī etc. never rejected their subordinate *strī-dharma*. If the argument is posed that the so-called *strī-dharma* is found thoroughly refuted during the mutual conversation of the cowherd maidens of Vraja and Lord Kṛṣṇa in S.B. 10.29.18-42, then such an argument cannot be sustained because the precedent set by Lord Kṛṣṇa in S.B. 10.23.35-34 during conversation with the *yajña-patnīs* is to be accepted as a universally accepted normal rule; whereas, the precedent set in S.B. 10.29.18-42 is an exceptional case. After all, what to speak of being on the most elevated stage of *siddha-gopīs*, the devotee women commonly found are not even on the stage of the *yajña-patnīs*!). So, should such passages like B.G. 9.32, S.B. 2.7.46, S.B. 11.27.4, and S.B. 1.8.20 which also equate women of upper *varṇas* as belonging to a sinful and lower birth (i.e. “*pāpa-jīvāḥ*” & “*pāpa-yonayaḥ*” etc.) be considered either interpolations or irrelevant passages of the *śāstra*? Yes! If we believe the logic behind the argument of the contenders in the present section of their draft under discussion, then even the said passages of S.B. and B.G. are to be considered interpolations!**

And it is also not expected every time that a particular book itself will give clarification on every apparent mutual contradiction found within it. If the harmonious reconciliation of such contradictory passages of Manu-smṛti are not given by it, then we shall analyse the proper perspective in which those statement can be duly interpreted.

In the M.S. 9.26 verse quoted by the contenders, the term “*prajanārthaṁ*” has not been translated at all, without which the context of other succeeding terms like “*mahā-bhāgāḥ*”, “*pūjārḥā*”, and “*grha-dīptayaḥ*” cannot be rightfully interpreted. “*Prajanārthaṁ*” means “for the sake of producing progeny”. “*Mahā-bhāgāḥ*” means “very auspicious”. “*Pūjārḥā*” should not be defined as that they are to be worshipped (to say that a wife is to be worshipped by her husband is incongruent to the *strī-dharma* because it is the duty of the wife to rather worship her husband as illustrated in S.B. 7.11.25). Rather, the term “*pūjārḥā*” should be interpreted as “to be respected”. Since, the context is of “*prajanārthaṁ*” or the “production of progeny,” naturally, the disposition of a husband towards his wife is indicated by the said verse of M.S. under contemplation. The Sanskrit noun ‘*pūjā*’ is a feminine rendering of originally emanating from the verbal root i.e. *dhātu* ‘*pūj*’. The verbal root ‘*pūj*’ is found within the ‘*curādi-gaṇa*’ section of the Pāṇini’s Grammar. In Sanskrit, the meaning(s) of the verbal root is retained by the noun(s) emanating from that verbal root. The said verbal root is analyzed by scholars of grammar as: “*pūj śraddhāyaṁ, sammāne, svāgate, arcanāyām vā*” or that “**the verbal root ‘*pūj*’ is utilized to indicate faith, respect, welcome, and worship**”. Since, it is incongruent for a husband to worship his wife, the other three meanings of the term “*pūjā*” can be properly applied in this context. **A husband has to faithfully trust, respect and welcome his better half (*ardha-aṅginī*) because without a wife, no one in this universe except Lord Brahmā can reproduce the dynasty.** Since, the wife is an essential and sole means of progeny and the base of the house-hold life as indicated in C.C. 1.15.7, she has to be given utmost respect by the husband in a way which does not affect the *strī-dharma* of his wife. According to *strī-dharma*, it is also improper for a wife to receive worship from her husband despite husband’s

voluntary willingness to do so. *Purāṇas* and the tradition of Vedic culture have forbidden that. Hence, a husband can never worship his wife. Also, it is not proper for a father or brother to worship their daughter or sister. Only, a son or daughter is allowed to worship his/her mother. **Therefore, the interpretation of the M.S. 9.26 as done by the contenders and their source translators, stands incorrect.**

The statement cited by the contenders from M.S. 3.56 is a very general statement. It does not prove that the women are to be worshipped by their husbands as just shown by us. Again, the source translators of the said verse have incorrectly rendered it. The term “*pūjyante*” can literally only be taken to mean ‘worship’ if it were to be the children of those women paying their tributes to their mothers. Otherwise, as shown by us formerly, even other male relations like those of brotherhood and fatherhood cannot worship their sisters and daughters, as it is contradictory to the convention established from the ages in the Vedic culture. Normally, in India, the followers of Vedic culture consider women to be fragmentally representing Goddess Lakṣmī and the males to be representing Lord Nārāyaṇa. To consider women as representation of the opulence of Lord is also substantiated in the B.G. verse 10.34. Hence, contextual considerations are must when interpreting such assertions of the *śāstras*.

The contenders’ citations from M.S. 9.15 & 9.18 to prove that Manu-smṛti’s views about women are interpolated, are incorrectly interpreted by them (i.e. the said contenders). If we are to believe that all derogatory assertions of M.S. about women are truly interpolated, then even numerous derogatory statements found in the Cāṇakya Nīti Śāstra (this book has been accepted by our SP as authentic and has taken many citations from it in his books also) will also have to be considered interpolated. But, as far as the traditional scholarly belief goes, C.N.S. has not been interpolated like M.S. because M.S. is a millions of years old treatise, whereas C.N.S. is only 2500 years old or so. Also, 80% of the quotations found in C.N.S. are directly taken (sometimes even without paraphrasing) from the Vidūra-nīti section and other relevant sections of Mahābhārata. So, let us analyze some parallel derogatory and complimentary citations about women as found in C.N.S. By comparing C.N.S.’s example, we will be able to ascertain that M.S.’s citations seemingly found derogatory about women are not interpolations but are rather authentic.

1) C.N.S. 5.6 – “The learned are envied by the foolish; rich men by the poor; **chaste women by adulteresses**; and beautiful ladies by ugly ones.”

Remarks (RKDB) – Herein, it is to be noted that Cāṇakya has accepted two types of women i.e. chaste and adulteresses.

2) C.N.S. 1.4 – “Even a *pandit* comes to grief by giving instruction to a foolish disciple, **by maintaining a wicked wife**, and by excessive familiarity with the miserable.”

3) C.N.S. 1.5 – “**A wicked wife**, a false friend, a saucy servant and living in a house with a serpent in it are nothing but death.”

Remarks (RKDB) – It is to be noted how Cāṇakya has accepted two types of women i.e. a wicked wife and a chaste one.

4) C.N.S. 4.13 – “She is a true wife who is clean (*suci*), expert, chaste, pleasing to the husband, and truthful.”

Remarks (RKDB) – It is to be noted how Cāṇakya is extolling the glory of chaste women.

5) C.N.S. 1.17 – “Women have hunger two-fold, shyness four-fold, daring six-fold, and lust eight-fold as compared to men.”

Remarks (RKDB) – It is to be noted how Cāṇakya is describing the general characteristics of women irrespective of whether chaste, unchaste, or adulteress.

6) C.N.S. 2.1 – **“Untruthfulness, rashness, guile, stupidity, avarice, uncleanness and cruelty are a woman's seven natural flaws.”**

Remarks (RKDB) – It is to be noted how Cāṇakya is describing the seven natural flaws of unchaste and wicked women only. Since, C.N.S. 4.13 has described truthfulness, chastity and cleanliness as the qualities of chaste women, we have to discern the above mentioned seven flaws as pertaining to the wicked women only.

7) C.N.S. 16.1 – **“The heart of a woman is not united; it is divided. While she is talking with one man, she looks lustfully at another and thinks fondly of a third in her heart.”**

Remarks (RKDB) – It is to be noted how above verse only talks about a woman who is unchaste and does not encompass chaste women.

Hence, it is established that the certain derogatory statements about female gender as found in M.S. 9.15 & 9.18 do certainly pertain to the women of wicked class only. The term “*paumścalyāt*” as seen in M.S. 9.15 is related with another term of the same flock i.e. “*puṁścalī*” which is translated as “a prostitute”. For the said reason, “*paumścalyāt*” denotes “adultery”. Therefore, these verses of M.S. cannot be applied to all women as faultily endeavoured by the contenders to demean the authenticity of Manu-smṛti.

Thus ends the Conclusive Stand No. 9th.

Prima Facie Contention No. 10 (BRD’s & MAD’s stand) – Section 3.3 (Page 7) –

INTERPOLATIONS

Taking note of this and other points, various scholars have opined that the *Manu-saṁhitā* we see today has suffered from considerable interpolation. In the introduction to the earliest known commentary on the *Manu-saṁhitā* by Medhatithi, we find the following verse written by the scribe of the commentary:

*mānyā kāpi manu-smṛtis-tad-ucitā vyākhyāpi medhātithēḥ
sā luptaiva vidher-vaśād kvacid-api prāpyaṁ na tat-pustakam
kṣoṇīndro madanaḥ sahāraṇa-suto deśāntarād-āhṛtaiḥ
jīrṇoddhāram-acīkarat tata itas-tat-pustakair likhyate*

Earlier, there was another *Manu-saṁhitā* with a suitable commentary by Medhatithi. That is, however, lost now due to the influence of providence and is no longer available. The king named *Madana*, the son

of *Sahāraṇa*, procured some scattered portions from various places and the remaining book was rewritten.

Srila Bhaktivinode Thakura also speaks about *Manu-saṁhitā*'s interpolations in his introduction to the *Kṛṣṇa-saṁhitā*,

The *varṇāśrama* system continued purely for a long time, until Jamadagni and his son Parashuram, of *kṣatriya* natures, claimed themselves as *brāhmaṇas*. By following a *varṇa* contrary to their nature out of self interest, they created friction between the *brāhmaṇa* and *kṣatriya* classes. Because of this seed of enmity between the two classes, the procedure of judging *varṇa* by birth became fixed. In time, this system of *varṇas* without reference to nature entered covertly in the *Manu-saṁhitā* and other scriptures.

Conclusive Stand No. 10 (RKDB's Perspective) – There is no doubt that Manu-smṛti has been considerably interpolated esp. in regards to the concept of the criterion of classification of the four *varṇas*, and issues like the consumption of cow beef etc. as shown earlier by us. Even BVT's above cited passage from Kṛṣṇa Saṁhitā only talks about the interpolation of perverted concept of the classification of four *varṇas* based on the seminal system. Therefore, it cannot be substantiated by the contenders as to how the Manu-smṛti includes interpolation about the *strī-dharma* of women also. Above all arguments, since SP has numerously emphasized on M.S. 9.3 considering the said text's authenticity, all other false arguments challenging the authenticity of M.S. on *strī-dharma* have been to rest. As stated earlier, even S.B. 11.7.25 makes the feminine occupation i.e. *strī-dharma* subordinate to the male gender.

Further analysis –

1st Proposition (from RKDB) – Certain unauthentic and incongruous statements to be found in the contemporary published editions of Manu-Smṛti which seem to permit the scripturally prohibited sinful activities, such as the consumption of liquor and beef, and also the classification of the *varṇāśrama* system rooted merely on the seminal birthright grounds - are to be only considered as outright displays of the mischievous naughty interpolators bent on destroying the Sanātana Vedic Dharma, though unsuccessfully; since a verily authentic scripture like Manu-Smṛti can never contain such bogus notions.

1st Substantiation: The certain possibility of interpolation in Manu-Smṛti is inferred on the grounds of the following verses of Skanda-Purāṇa and Bhaviṣya-Purāṇa as also quoted by Śrīmad Ānandatīrtha Pūrṇaprajña Madhvācārya in his Brahma-Sūtra Bhāṣya 2.1.6 :

**"ṛg-yajuḥ-sāmātharvāñca bhāratam pañcarātrakam /
mūla-rāmāyaṇaṁ caiva veda ity eva śabditāḥ //**

**purāṇāni ca yānīha vaiṣṇavāni vido viduḥ /
svataḥ-prāmāṇyaṁ eteṣāṁ nātra kiñcid vicāryate //**

**yac ca anukūlam etasya tac ca śāstraṁ prakīrtitam /
ato'nya grantha-vistāro naiva śāstraṁ kuvartma tat //"**

Note: A slight variation is also found as instead of "**veda ity eva śabditāḥ**", we see: "**śāstramityabhidhīyate**" in some editions - but the meaning remain almost same.

Rendition (by RKD)

"The Ṛg Veda, Yajur Veda, Sāma Veda, Atharva Veda, Mahābhārata, Pañcarātra and original Rāmāyaṇa are all considered Vedic literature and are to be rightly considered as true scriptures. The *Purāṇas* (such as the Naradīya Purāṇa, Viṣṇu Purāṇa and Bhāgavata Purāṇa etc. six *sātvika-purāṇas*) are especially meant for *Vaiṣṇavas* and are also Vedic literature. As such, whatever is stated within the *Purāṇas*, Mahābhārata and Rāmāyaṇa is self-evident. There is no need for interpretation. Whichever other literature is favourable to these (above mentioned original self-evident scriptures) shall also be considered possessing scriptural authority. Contrarily, all other unfavourable treatises shall be treated as merely inappropriate and unauthentic extension devoid of any scriptural authority."

Remarks contd. – Since, two most highly ranked scriptures of Sanātana Vedic Dharma viz., Śrīmad Bhāgavatam and Mahābhārata do not advocate some of the mischievous notions found in the interpolated Manu-smṛti text, hence, such statements have to be disregarded considering them to be incompatible/unfavourable to the other authentic scriptural passages and therefore, as mere interpolations.

Self-substantiated 2nd Proposition: The discrimination pertaining to the interpolated and non-interpolated texts of Manu-smṛti (and other textbooks under similar compositional controversy) should be based on the above mentioned rule, and also by accounting the relevant passages of Manu-Smṛti which are quoted by Śrīla Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī and by other *vaiṣṇava ācāryas* either of our Gauḍīya lineage or belonging to other bona fide *vaiṣṇava* lineages in their respective writings.

3rd Proposition: Statements of Manu-smṛti prohibiting the rights of studying Vedas, performance of fire sacrifice, and wearing sacred thread are not interpolations because they are in corroboration with the viewpoint of SB 1.4.25 and Madhvācārya's quotation of Vyoma-Saṁhitā in his commentary to Brahma-sutra 1.1.1. and the sub-commentaries of Jayatīrtha Muni and Jagannātha Yati (as established earlier in synopsis and shall be depicted later in depth).

Thus ends the Conclusive Stand No. 10th.

Prima Facie Contention No. 11 (BRD's & MAD's stand) – Section 3.4 (Page No. 7th) –

NOT APPLICABLE IN KALI YUGA

Even if one were to believe that the *Manu-saṁhitā* that is found today is not an interpolated version of the original one, one would still be discouraged to accept it as a current authority by the following statement of the *Parāśara-smṛti*,

***kṛte tu mānavā dharmās tretāyām gautamāḥ smṛtāḥ
dvāpare śāṅkhalikhitāḥ kalau pāraśarāḥ smṛtāḥ (1.24)***

The *Manu-saṁhitā* is applicable in *Satya-yuga*, the *Gautama-smṛti* is applicable in *Tretā-yuga*, the *Śāṅkha-likhita-smṛti* is applicable in *Dvāpara-yuga* and the *Parāśara-smṛti* is applicable in *Kali-yuga*.

Conclusive Stand No. 11 (RKDB's Perspective) – Though Parāśara Smṛti has been accepted as a superseding authority over Manu-smṛti by the said contenders, they have failed in their 20 pages long essay to reproduce even a single quotation from Parāśara Smṛti nullifying the stand of M.S. 11.36-37, M.S. 4.205-206 and S.B. 1.4.25 (all quoted earlier). Therefore, the duplicitous behaviour of the contenders is exposed i.e. they have merely used the statement of Parāśara Smṛti to demean the value of Manu Smṛti, but have conclusively failed to back their stand by Parāśara Smṛti. It is also proved thereby, that since Parāśara Smṛti does not have any contradiction with Manu Smṛti (if it had, it would have been produced by the said contenders), the said evidences of M.S. 4.205-206 stand as an irrefutable authority. Even if we presuppose that Parāśara Smṛti contained assertions contradicting M.S.'s citations, the overwhelmingly unexcelled authority of S.B. 1.4.25 would strike it down.

The contenders' notion that Manu-smṛti is not at all applicable in Kali-yuga is not what is stated in the citation of P.S. 1.24. P.S. 1.24 is not an assertion denying the importance of Manu-smṛti. P.S. 1.24 is not a clear cut denying statement like that of Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa's 4.185.180 verse cited again in C.C. 1.17.164 and cited earlier in our draft. The said verse of B.V.P. explicitly denies the five specific activities to be undertaken in Kali-yuga. But, in the case of P.S. 1.24, only the preferential significance of Parāśara-smṛti has been explicitly highlighted and not that the relevance of Manu Smṛti has been neglected. Neither does it imply that Manu Smṛti has lost its relevance in Kali Yuga. Had Manu Smṛti lost its relevance in Kali-Yuga, SP would not have mentioned the names of both *smṛtis* in the following excerpted passage.

Evidence – “Practically the qualified Brahmins are meant for direction to the Kings for proper administration in terms of the scriptures like the **Manusamhitā and Dharmasāstras of Parāśara.**”

>>> Ref. VedaBase => S.B. 1.9.27's Purport

Remarks contd. – Here we see that SP is giving almost the same importance to both the Manu Samhitā and the Parāśara Smṛti. Hence, the contenders' contention denying current authority of Manu Smṛti is refuted. Had Manu Smṛti lost its all relevance in Kali Yuga, SP would not have mentioned it as relevant in a Purport to S.B. 1.9.27 which had been written some 45 years back i.e. in this Kali Yuga. When SP says that qualified *brāhmaṇas* are meant to give direction in terms of the scriptures like Manu Smṛti and Parāśara Smṛti, by the very usage of the present plural form of the term 'be' i.e. 'are' – is indicated the current relevance of Manu Smṛti. If the antagonists adamantly persist to proclaim that S.B. 1.9.27 verse was in connection to the *strī-dharma* and *rāja-dharma* etc. spoken by Bhīṣmadeva unto the Pāṇḍavas (the detailed description can be found in Mahābhārata's Anuśāsana and Śānti Parvas) and thus SP is pronouncing his cited statement in contextual connection to the Dvāpara Yuga, then the very argument of the contenders i.e. that Manu Smṛti does not have relevance in any other *yugas* except for Satya Yuga and Parāśara Smṛti does not have relevance outside the purview of Kali Yuga – is smashed into pieces because according to the cited verse of P.S. 1.24, both Parāśara Smṛti and Manu Smṛti are not applicable in Dvāpara Yuga – at least according to the narrow interpretation of the contenders. The contenders have smashed their own stand by raising this last argument. Hence, it is to be accepted that according to SP, both Manu Smṛti and Parāśara Smṛti are applicable in Kali Yuga, though there may be some preference given to the Parāśara Smṛti based on P.S. 1.24.

However, in our Gauḍīya Sampradāya, the said verse of P.S. 1.24 has not been given much emphasis and therefore, it is seen that both Śrīla Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Prabhupāda have only highlighted Manu Smṛti in their writings. Evidences –

1) 1st Proposition: Manu-Smṛti has been reverentially accepted by Śrīla Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmīpāda who is a *vaiṣṇava-smṛtyācārya* or the ultimate *ācārya*/authority for *vaiṣṇava* rituals in our Gauḍīya Sampradāya as one of the greatest evidences for ascertaining the Vedic *vaiṣṇava* ritualistic tradition. Śrīla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, born in a South Indian Śrī Vaiṣṇava Brahmana Pujārī family of the Śrī Raṅganāthasvāmī Temple in Śrīrangam, Tamil Nadu, South India - was fully well-versed in the *vaiṣṇava* way of Vedic rites. Hence, even Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmīpāda made Śrīla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī the final editor of his own composition known as Śrī Haribhaktivilāsa (which deals with both the Vedic and *pāñcarātric/tāntric* rituals relating to devotional service). And Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī happened to be in this Kali-yuga and not the other three preceding *yugas*.

1st Substantiation/Verification: Invocation for Satkriyāsāradīpikā, Verses 6 & 7 -

***"varṇāśramāntyajādīnāṃ vedaiḥ paurāṇikādibhiḥ /
manvādī-dharma-śāstroktairvacanaiḥ sa-pramāṇakaiḥ //"***

***"śrīmad-govinda-bhaktānāṃ sevānāmāparādhataḥ /
kṛteyaṃ paddhatiḥ kintu piṭṛ-devārcanaṃ vinā //"***

Rendition/Translation (done by the composer of the essay himself i.e. RKDB, since no English translation of this book is available up to the date): "This ritualistic compendium (i.e. Satkriyā-sāra-dīpikā and also the related appendix portion known as Saṁskāra-dīpikā) is composed based on the authentic scriptural pronunciations of textbooks like Vedas, *Purāṇas*, and **Manu-Smṛti** and other *dharma-śāstras* (like Yājñavalkya-Smṛti, Hārīṭ-Smṛti etc.), with an exclusion of the processes related to the worships of demigods and forefathers, while concurrently avoiding the inclusion of *sevā* and *nāma aparādhataḥ*, - solely for the benefit of the exclusive devotees of Lord Govindadeva who happen to be either within or without the purview of *varṇāśrama* i.e. including those devotees who are born in the outcaste and *mleccha/yavana* families."

Hence, the solid corroboration for the authenticity of Manu-Smṛti within Gauḍīya Sampradāya has been established on firm grounds.

2nd Proposition: Manu-Smṛti has been adorably accepted as a strong evidence not only for the Vedic ritualistic branch, but also for the philosophical branch of Vedas esp. by the illustrious Founder-Ācārya of ISKCON i.e. our Śrīla Prabhupāda.

2nd Substantiation: In the celebrated Bhaktivedānta Purport to the C.C. 1.6.14-15:

"If matter were accepted as the original cause of creation, all the authorized scriptures in the world would be useless, for in every scripture, especially the Vedic scriptures like the Manu-smṛti, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is said to be the ultimate creator. **The Manu-smṛti is considered the highest Vedic direction to humanity. Manu is the giver of law to mankind**, and in the Manu-smṛti it is clearly stated that before the creation the entire universal space was darkness, without information and without variety, and was in a state of complete suspension, like a dream."

3rd Proposition: Rājarṣi Mahārāja Manu has been reckoned among the twelve foremost apostles of the Bhāgavata-Dharma (i.e. the path of devotional service) and so his treatise i.e. Manu-Smṛti cannot be considered to be a book meant solely and primarily for the "*smārtas*" or "those who are non-*vaiṣṇava* Vedic followers", but rather has to be considered a manual meant solely for the followers of Bhāgavata-

Dharma.

3rd Substantiation: S.B. 6.3.20-21 as cited below.

**"svayambhur nāradaḥ śambhuḥ kumāraḥ kapilo manuḥ /
prahlādo janako bhīṣmo balir vaiyāsakir vayam //**

**dvādaśaite vijānīmo dharmam bhāgavatam bhaṭṭāḥ /
guhyaṁ viśuddham durbodham yam jñātvāmṛtam aśnute //"**

Rendition (as found in B.B.T. edition): "Lord Brahmā, Bhagavān Nārada, Lord Śiva, the four Kumāras, Lord Kapila [the son of Devahūti], **Svāyambhuva Manu**, Prahlāda Mahārāja, Janaka Mahārāja, Grandfather Bhīṣma, Bali Mahārāja, Śukadeva Gosvāmī and I myself know the real religious principle. My dear servants, this transcendental religious principle, which is known as *bhāgavata-dharma*, or surrender unto the Supreme Lord and love for Him, is uncontaminated by the material modes of nature. It is very confidential and difficult for ordinary human beings to understand, but if by chance one fortunately understands it, he is immediately liberated, and thus he returns home, back to Godhead."

Conclusion: It is established on the firm grounds that Manu-Smṛti is a scripture which gets placement among the highest category of Vedic textbooks and is meant solely for the advocacy of *Bhāgavata-Dharma* as accepted by Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, Śrīla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, and our Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Thus ends the Conclusive Stand No. 11th.

Prima Facie Contention No. 12 (BRD's and MAD's stand) – Section 3.5 (Page 7th of their draft) –

NOT A PRINCIPAL AUTHORITY

A similar point is made by Srila Madhvācārya in his work *Mahābhārata-tātparya-nirṇaya*:

vaiṣṇavāni purāṇāni pañcarātrātmakatvataḥ pramāṇāny eva manvādyāḥ smṛtayo 'py anukūlataḥ

Purāṇas which establish the supremacy of Vishnu are authority as they convey what is stated in *Pañcarātra Smṛti śāstras* like those of Manu and others are also authority so far as they are consistent with these. (Part I)

Conclusive Stand No. 12 (RKDB's Perspective) – Absolutely no objection to the above cited verse from M.T.N of Madhvācārya. Since, there is no difference of import between the *sātvika-purāṇas* and the Nārada Pañcarātra, the six Vaiṣṇava Purāṇas are considered to be the expansion of the purport of Nārada Pañcarātra. The contenders have made our stand victorious by raising this verse from M.T.N. 1.32. However, we still have an objection to the biased way the last part of the cited verse is interpreted in. The contenders, in order to minimize the glory of Manu Smṛti, have resorted to an explanation turning Manu Smṛti's consistency with the Vedas seem doubtful. According to their translation of the verse, if Manu Smṛti remains consistent with the Purāṇas, it is to be considered authorized. However, Manu-smṛti is always consistent with the import of the Purāṇas and therefore, the authentic Madhva

Sampradāya commentator i.e. Śrī Govindācārya has explained the true meaning of the said verse in his Sanskrit commentary i.e. Nirṇaya-bhāva-candrikā to the M.B.N. Evidences –

(i) ***“anukūlataḥ vedānukūlatvādeva manvādyā api smṛtayaḥ pramāṇāni syuḥ.”***

Rendition

“Smṛtis beginning with the Manu Smṛti are also to be considered evidences because they are in alignment with the Vedas.”

Remarks contd. – Hence, it is established that the whole Manu Smṛti is in consistency with the Vedas. Those parts inconsistent should be considered interpolations. **However, statements of Manu Smṛti denying rights of Vedic sacrifice, Vedic studies and sacred thread to the female gender are not to be considered interpolations because they are in conformation with the S.B. 1.4.25.** For the said reason, the cited M.B.N. verse turns favourable to our stand.

(ii) ***yo veda-bāhyāḥ smṛtayo yāśca kāśca kudṛṣṭayaḥ / sarvāstā niṣphalāḥ pretya tamo-niṣṭhā hi tāḥ smṛtāḥ*** // M.S. 12.95

utpādyante cyavante ca yānyato ‘nyāni kānicit / tānyarvākkālikatayā niṣphalānyanṛtāni ca // M.S. 12.96

Rendition

“All those traditions (*smṛtis*) and despicable systems of philosophy, which are not based on the Vedas, produce no reward after death; for they are declared to be founded on darkness.” M.S. 12.95

“All those doctrines, differing from the Vedas, which spring up and soon perish, are worthless and false, because they are of modern date.” M.S. 12.96

Remarks (RKDB) – From the above cited dual verses of Manu-smṛti, it is concluded on the substratum of the *vyatireka-nyāya* (i.e. logic of reverse order of contemplation) that since Manu-smṛti (excluding the interpolated portions) is in full concordance with the Vedas, it invalidates the heterodox *smṛtis* and *darśanas* (i.e. philosophical systems). **Had Manu-smṛti not been in full synchronization with the Vedas, it would have lost the right of proclaiming so and if had proclaimed as such, would have lost its own validity by such assertions.** For the said reason too, it is deducted that Manu-smṛti is in full harmony with the Vedas. From the quotations of Skanda Purāṇa cited earlier in the Conclusive Stand No. 1, it is evident that Vedas, Smṛtis, and Purāṇas are successively higher in hierarchy.

Thus ends the Conclusive Stand No. 12th.

Prima Facie Contention No. 13 – (BRD’s & MAD’s Stand) Sections 4.1-2 (Pages 8th & 9th of their draft) –

APPARENT CONTRADICTION IN THE *HARI-BHAKTI-VILASA*

The *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* is the law book of the *Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas*. Evidence is found in the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* regarding ladies giving *mantras*. Before we consider that, there is a certain precaution which Srila Prabhupada gives us regarding *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*:

Actually, *Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī* collected only a summary of the elaborate descriptions of *Vaiṣṇava* regulative principles from the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*. It is *Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī*'s opinion, however, that to follow the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* strictly is to actually follow the *Vaiṣṇava* rituals in perfect order. He claims that the *smārta-samāja*, which is strictly followed by caste *brāhmaṇas*, has influenced portions that *Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī* collected from the original *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*. It is therefore very difficult to find out *Vaiṣṇava* directions from the book of *Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī*. It is better to consult the commentary made by *Sanātana Gosvāmī* himself for the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* under the name of *Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā*. Some say that the same commentary was compiled by *Gopīnātha-pūjā Adhikārī*, who was engaged in the service of *Śrī Rādhā-ramaṇājī* and who happened to be one of the disciples of *Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī*. (Purport to *Caitanya Caritāmṛta*, *Madhya* 1.35)

Having seen this, let's examine the positive and negative evidence from *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* [12] regarding female *dīkṣā* gurus:

POSITIVE EVIDENCE

***tāntrikeṣu ca mantreṣu dīkṣāyām yoṣitām api
sādhvīnām adhikāro 'sti sūdrādīnām ca sad-dhiyām*** (1.194)

In all matters of initiations in tantras and mantras, saintly ladies have all rights, and so do the *sūdras* and others who are dedicated to serving their spiritual masters. (The word *adhikārah* is to be noted in the original Sanskrit.)

***āgamoktena mārgeṇa strī-sūdrair api pūjanam
kartavyam śraddhayā viṣṇoś cintayitvā patiṁ hṛdi*** (1.195)

Through the path shown in the *āgamas*, ladies and *sūdras* can also worship the deities. They should faithfully perform such worship, thinking about their respective Lords in their hearts.

***strīṇām apy adhikāro 'sti viṣṇor ārādhanaḍiṣu
patī-priya-ratānām ca śrutir eṣā sanātani*** (1.197)

Ladies too have all right to conduct the worship, etc., of Lord Vishnu, and so do those girls who are unmarried and desire a suitable husband. This is the verdict of the eternal *śruti*. (Again, the word *adhikārah* is to be noted in the original Sanskrit.)

***agastya-saṁhitāyām śrī-rāma-mantra-rājam uddiśya—
śucivratatamāḥ sūdrā dhārmikā dvija-sevakāḥ
striyaḥ pati-vratāś cānye pratilomānulomajāḥ
lokāś cāṇḍāla-paryantāḥ sarve 'py atrādhikāriṇaḥ*** (1.198)

In the *Agastya Saṁhitā*, indicating the *Śrī-rāma-mantra-rāja*, it is said, —All have equal qualification for this mantra, whether they be a *sūdra* who is dedicated to his vows and eager to serve the *brāhmaṇas*,

ladies who are dedicated to their husbands, or dog-eaters who are born of any type of marriage (pratiloma or anuloma).

***svapna-labdhe striyā datte mālā-mantre ca try akṣare
ekākṣare tathā mantre siddhādīn naiva śodhayet*** (1.211)

One should not ritually purify a mantra obtained in a dream, a mantra given by a woman, a mālā-mantra [a mantra of over twenty syllables] or mantras of one or three syllables for siddha and so on.

***gr̥hasthā vanagās caiva yatayo brahmacārīṇaḥ
striyaḥ sūdrādayas caiva sarve yatrādhikārīṇaḥ*** (1.218)

The gr̥hastha, vānaprastha, sannyāsī, brahmacārī, ladies and sūdras are all eligible to receive the [Gopāla] mantra. (The word ‘adhikārīṇaḥ’ is again to be noted in the original Sanskrit.)

***striyo vā yadi vā sūdrā brāhmaṇāḥ kṣatriyādayaḥ
pūjayitvā śilā-cakraṁ labhante śāśvataṁ padam*** (Hari-bhakti-vilāsa 5.452)

All attain to the eternal spiritual world by worshipping the śālagrāma-śilā, whether a lady, a sūdra, brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya, etc.

Conclusive Stand No. 13 (RKDB’s Perspective) – We have no objection to the prelude revealing apparent contradictions in H.B.V. and written by the contenders. We shall also show from H.B.V. and its commentary i.e. Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā as to how the feminine gender is prohibited to occupy the post of an *ācārya*. **It is also interesting to note that the contenders have not substantiated their pro-FDG stand by quoting any such passages from H.B.V. which would rather directly illuminate the subject of the possibility of any female *dīkṣā guru*. Any such passages would be from H.B.V. 1.32-58 which offer an elaborate illustration of the qualities of a *dīkṣā-guru*.** As we shall contemplate ahead, such relevant passages indirectly deny the possibility of a female *ācārya* (except for the cases of *nitya-siddha* female *ācāryas* like Jāhnavā Mātā, Gangāmātā Gosvāminī, Hemalatā Thākuraṇī etc.) by prefixing a pre-requisite qualification of the eligibility of bestowing and holding the sacred-thread or ‘*yajñopavīta*’ for an *ācārya*, which traditionally speaking only male *ācāryas* can do. Only after wearing *yajñopavīta*, a disciple is eligible to perform both the Vedic and *pāñcarātrika yajñas* and the study of the Vedas. Feminine gender is not permitted to perform even the *pāñcarātrika yajñas* because, as stated earlier in the sub-commentaries of Jayatīrtha and Jagannātha Tīrtha, women are only allowed to partly study the *pāñcarātra* and *purāṇic* texts (naturally excluding Śrīmad Bhāgavatam and Mahābhārata which are meant for all living entities irrespective of caste and gender). **Also, the citations from H.B.V. as cited by the contenders above, are irrelevant to the present topic of FDG because such quotes only allow the *strī, sūdras* etc. the discharge of the *arcana-mārga* of devotional service. Such citations have no relation with the context of *guruship*.** Nonetheless, these citations shall be analysed for the sake of clarification.

In the verses cited from H.B.V. 194, 197, & 218, the terms ‘*adhikāraḥ*’ and ‘*adhikārīṇaḥ*’ only refer to the rights of women and *sūdras* in a specific context. While translating H.B.V. 194, the contenders have erroneously interpreted the verse as: “**In all matters of initiations in *tantras* and *mantras*,.....**”. The actual translation should read as: “**In the matter of receiving initiation within *tantras* and *mantras*,.....**”. Why so? Because, if we accept the translation of the contenders, it comes out to mean

that all matters of initiations imply both the receiving and allotting parts of initiation process. However, as we shall see in the analysis of H.B.V. 1.32-58 (indicated above and shall be explained later on), females cannot allot *vaiṣṇava pāñcarātrika* initiation as well as the Vedic *upanayanam saṁskāra* (i.e. sacred-thread ceremony) because they don't have full qualifications of being an *ācārya* as per the dictums of H.B.V. 1.32-58, M.S. 2.140 and S.B. 11.3.47-48 along with the commentaries of *ācāryas* on it. In ISKCON's second initiation process, both the Vedic *upanayanam saṁskāra* and *pāñcarātrika vaiṣṇava dīkṣā* are conferred on the male candidates concurrently as evident through the celebrated purport to the S.B. 1.4.25 verse. Apart from the numerous dictums of *śrutis* and *smṛtis*, as per the convention of Gauḍīya Maṭha, ISKCON and all the bona fide four *vaiṣṇava sampradāyas*, only males are allowed to receive a sacred-thread and therefore only a male can become an *ācārya* because of the affirmative statement of Vāyu Purāṇa. Evidences –

(i) ***“upanīyatu yaḥ śiṣyaṁ vedamadyāpayedvijah / sa-kalpaṁ sa-rahasyaṁ ca tamācāryaṁ pracakṣate //”*** Manu Smṛti 2.140

Rendition

“They call that *brāhmaṇa* who initiates the pupil and teaches him the Veda together with the *Kalpa* and the *Rahasyas*, the teacher (*ācārya* of the latter).” M.S. 2.140

Remarks (RKDB) – Since, *purāṇas* and *itihāsas* are the *pañcama veda* (i.e. fifth Veda), their teaching is also included in this category. The initiation or ***‘upanīyatu’*** referred to herein, is the sacred-thread ceremony or the *upanayanam saṁskāra* which is part of ISKCON's second initiation process. It is also indicated that both the *dīkṣā-guru* and the *śikṣā-guru* can be known by the name of an *ācārya*.

(ii) ***“ācinoti yaḥ śāstrarthamācāre sthāpayatyapi / svayamācarate yasmādācāryastena kīrtitaḥ //”***

Rendition

“An *ācārya* is one who collects the factual conclusions of the scriptures while implementing them in his own actions and making others (his disciples) follow them.”

Remarks (RKDB) – So how can a female serve as an *ācārya* (as explained earlier in the citation from M.S. 2.140, an *ācārya* is one who performs the sacred-thread ceremony etc.), if she cannot hold the sacred thread and thus remain bereft of implementing a sacred thread on herself (in order to be an *ācārya*, one has to implement the tradition on oneself as explained in this verse of Vāyu Purāṇa) i.e. what to speak of bestowing it on others!

(iii) The below mentioned verse S.B. 11.3.48 has been cited in the Bhakti Sandarbha of Jīva Gosvāmī twice in the context of the *mantra-dīkṣā-guru*.

1st place of citation – ***“mantra-gurustveka evetyāha – “labhvānugraha ācāryāt tena sandarśitāgamah / mahā-puruṣamabhyarcet mūrtyābhimatayātmanah //” – anugraho mantra-dīkṣā-rūpaḥ āgamo mantra-vidhi-śāstraṁ asyaikatvameka-vacanena bodhyate.”*** Anuccheda 207th, Bhakti Sandarbha

Rendition

“One can have only one *mantra-guru* as indicated (by the Sage Avirhotra in S.B. 11.3.48). “One who has obtained the grace of the *ācārya* and has learnt from him the method of worship, should worship the Lord in the form to which he is attracted.” In this verse, the word *anugraha* (grace) means receiving grace in the form of *mantra* initiation. The *‘āgamaḥ’* learnt from the guru refers to the scripture that

describes the *mantra* and the method of worship according to that *mantra*. The use of the singular case here implies that there can be only **one *mantra guru***.” Anuccheda 207th, Bhakti Sandarbha

2nd place of citation – “*athārcanaṁ taccāgamoktāvāhanādi-kramakam. tanmārga śraddhā cedāśrita-mantra-gurustaṁ viśeṣataḥ pṛcchet tathodāhṛtaṁ* -- “*labdhvānugraha ācāryāt tena sandarśitāgamaḥ...*” *ityādinā.*” – Anuccheda 281st (sometimes 283rd), Bhakti Sandarbha

Rendition

“Now we will discuss *arcana*, or worship of the deity. This worship consists of various procedures, beginning with invoking the Lord’s presence in the form of the deity, as described in the *āgama* scriptures. **If one has faith in this path, one should specifically inquire about it, from one’s *mantra-guru*, as pointed out earlier:** “One who has obtained the grace from the *ācārya* and has learnt from him the method of worship, should worship the Lord in the form to which he is attracted.”” Anuccheda 281st Bhakti Sandarbha

***ya āśu hṛdaya-granthiṁ nirjihīṣuḥ parātmanaḥ /
vidhinopacared devam tantraktena ca keśavam //***

SYNONYMS

yaḥ -- one who; *āśu*-quickly; *hṛdaya-granthiṁ* -- the knot of the heart (false identification with the material body); *nirjihīṣuḥ* -- desirous of cutting; *parātmanaḥ* -- of the transcendental soul; *vidhinā* -- with the regulations; *upacaret* -- he should worship; *devam* -- the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *tantra-uktena* -- which are described by the *tantras* (the supplementary Vedic literatures that give detailed instructions for spiritual practice); *ca* -- as well (in addition to those regulations which are directly *vedoktam*); *keśavam* -- Lord Keśava.

TRANSLATION

One who desires to quickly cut the knot of false ego, which binds the spirit soul, should worship the Supreme Lord, Keśava, by the regulations found in Vedic literatures such as the *tantras*.

>>> Ref. VedaBase => SB 11.3.47

***labdhvānugraha ācāryāt tena sandarśitāgamaḥ /
mahā-puruṣam abhyarcen mūrtyābhimatayātmanaḥ //***

SYNONYMS

labdhvā -- having obtained; *anugrahaḥ* -- mercy; *ācāryāt* -- from the spiritual master; *tena* -- by him; *sandarśita* -- being shown; *āgamaḥ* -- (the process of worship given by) the *vaiṣṇava-tantras*; *mahā-puruṣam*-the Supreme Person; *abhyarcet* -- the disciple should worship; *mūrtyā* -- in the particular personal form; *abhimatayā* -- which is preferred; *ātmanaḥ* -- by himself.

TRANSLATION

Having obtained the mercy of his spiritual master, who reveals to the disciple the injunctions of Vedic scriptures, the devotee should worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the particular personal form of the Lord the devotee finds most attractive.

>>> Ref. VedaBase => SB 11.3.48

Bhāvārtha-dīpikā commentary of Śrīdhara Svāmī – “*vaidikaṁ karma-yogamuktivā tāntrikamāha. ya āśviti. parātmanaḥ parasyaiva sata ātmano jīvasya hṛdaya-granthimahāṅkāra-bandhaṁ nirhartumicchuh sanstantroktena ca vidhinā prakāreṇa bhajet. tantramāgamaḥ. ca-kārāt vaidikena saha samuccayamāha.*” S.B. 11.3.47

“*tameva vidhimāha. labdhvānugraha ityādinā. tenācāryeṇa sandarśita āgamo 'rcana-prakāro yasya saḥ.*” S.B. 11.3.48

Rendition

“After the description of the Vedic *karma-yoga* (as described in the previous verse of S.B. 11.3.46), the *tāntrika karma-yoga* (i.e. devotional service or *bhakti-yoga*) is being described by the verses commencing from “*ya āśu.....*” etc. One who is desirous of eradicating the knot of the heart characterized by the false ego related to the transcendental factual spirit soul should perform worship by the mode (of worship) mentioned in the *tantras*. ‘*Tantra*’ means the *āgamas* (i.e. *pañcarātras*). **By the term ‘ca’ i.e. ‘and’, the amalgamation of Vedic *karma-yoga* is described.**” – S.B. 11.3.47

“That mode of worship is being described by the verse beginning with “*labdvānugraha.....*” etc. By the one who has been shown the mode of worship by the *ācārya* i.e. *āgama* (the devotee should worship the Lord).” – S.B. 11.3.48

Sārārtha-varṣiṇī commentary of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī – “*parātmanaḥ vastuto dehāt paraścāsāvātmā jīvaśceti tasya hṛdaya-granthimahaṅkāraṁ nirhartumicchurbhavet tantra āgamastaduktena ca-kārāt vaidikena ca.*” (S.B. 11.3.47)

Rendition

“The transcendental soul i.e. this spirit soul which is factually aloof from the body viz., the *jīvātmā*. If one is desirous of uprooting the knot of false ego in the heart of that *jīvātmā*, then by the method prescribed in the *tantrāgamas* **along with the Vedic method as denoted by the usage of the ‘ca-kāra’ i.e. ‘and’.** (one should worship the Supreme Lord). (S.B. 11.3.47)

Subodhini commentary of Vallabhācārya – “*....upanayanādi-kartā ācāryāḥ tad-anugrahāt na veda-virodhaḥ....*” S.B. 11.3.48

Rendition

“(Here) ‘*ācārya*’ is defined as the one who performs the sacred-thread ceremony (i.e. *upanayanam saṁskāra*) and ‘by whose grace’ (i.e. ‘*labhvānugrahācāryāt*’) indicates that there does not exist an issue of contradiction with the Vedic system as well.”

Remarks (RKDB): By the citations of M.S. 2.140 and Vāyu-Purāṇa, it was established that the *ācārya* has to be the unquestionably connected with the Vedic tradition because he is considered to be the giver of sacred-thread. Then it was established that the S.B. 1.3.48 has been specifically used to define the role of the *mantra-dīkṣā-guru* at least twice in *Bhakti Sandarbha*. After a thorough contemplation on the commentaries of previous *ācāryas* (we have deliberately not included the commentaries of Vīrarāghavācārya and Vijayadhvaja Tīrtha because of their elaborate sizes, but they are also of the same opinion as the three commentators quoted above) on S.B. 1.3.47-48 as cited above, **we come to the conclusion that the *mantra-dīkṣā-guru* has to be compulsorily well versed and eligible to study the Vedas and Vedic tradition. Hence, it is confirmed that since the women have no right to study the four**

Vedas (as shown earlier numerous) and undergo the sacred-thread ceremony, they also cannot act as the *mantra-dīkṣā-guru* as per the norms of the Vedic culture.

Therefore, the terms ‘*adhikārah*’ and ‘*adhikārināh*’ as seen in H.B.V. 1.194, 197, and 218 certainly do not imply the aspect of allotting part of the total initiation process (as wrongly construed by the contenders in their rendition of the said verses), but do only indicate the receiving part of the initiation process. Allotter of initiation cum sacred-thread ceremony is the *mantra-dīkṣā-guru* who is male, whereas, the recipient of the initiation minus sacred-thread ceremony are the female disciples.

Moreover, the eligibility or right (*adhikārah*) of the women in the context of *dīkṣā* only indicates the aspect of receiving initiation which can be corroborated as follows.

(iv) “*gr̥hīta-viṣṇu-dīkṣāko viṣṇu-pūjā-paro narah / vaiṣṇavo ‘bhihito ‘bhiññairitaro ‘smādavaishṇavaḥ //*” (H.B.V. 1.55)

Rendition

“Learned scholars have determined that a Vaiṣṇava is one who is initiated into a Viṣṇu *mantra* in accordance with the regulations of *śāstra*, and who is engaged in the worship of *Śrī Viṣṇu*. All others are known as non-*Vaiṣṇavas*.”

Remarks (RKDB) – Therefore, to translate H.B.V. 1.194 as “In all matters of initiations in *tantras* and *mantras*...” is quite an erroneous interpretation on the part of the said contenders. Only, in the matter of worshiping and receiving initiation, the eligibility of women etc. prevails. **Our stand gets confirmation from the latter verses cited from H.B.V. 1.195, 197, 198, 218 and H.B.V. 5.452, wherein it is clearly indicated by the terms like ‘*pūjanaṁ*’ i.e. ‘worship’, ‘*ārāhanādiṣu*’ i.e. ‘in the matter of worship’, ‘*atra*’ i.e. ‘in the matter of Rāma-mantra’, ‘*yatra*’ i.e. ‘in the matter of Gopāla-mantra’, and ‘*pūjayitvā*’ i.e. ‘after worshiping’. Nowhere, in these verses is indicated the notion of women eligible to allot *dīkṣā*. They have been mistakenly quoted by the contenders to prove their feminist stand by hook or crook.**

Again it is to be noted in the citation from H.B.V. 1.198 taken originally from Agastya Saṁhitā that the phrase “*striyaḥ pativratāḥ....*” indicates that **only those women who are chastely dedicated to serve their husbands are allowed to receive the Rāma-mantra**. The H.B.V. 1.197 has been erroneously translated by the contenders as “girls unmarried and desiring a suitable husband”. Actually, the compounded phrase “*pati-priya-ratānām*” indicates those women who are dedicated to give pleasure to their husbands. So, if these are the qualifications for a woman receiving initiation into the *vaiṣṇava-mantras*, how can any divorced woman (i.e. in the Vedic culture, there exists no scope for divorce at all) not dedicated to serve her devotee husband become the allotter of these *vaiṣṇava-mantras*?

The only verse from H.B.V. cited by contenders and which could possibly seem to support the idea of FDG is the H.B.V. 1.211. But, after a thorough analysis of the context, even that possibility is refuted. How? Let us ponder. Evidences –

(i) “*śrīmad-gopāla-devasya sarvaiśvarya-pradarśinaḥ | tāḍṛk-śaktiṣu mantreṣu nahi kiñcid vicāryate ||213||*”

Dig-darśinī – *vṛthatve hetuṁ likhati—śrīmad iti | tāḍṛśī śrī-gopāla-deva-sāḍṛśī śaktir yeṣāṁ teṣu ||213||*

Rendition

““There does not arise a necessity to even slightly contemplate on the *mantras* having similar powers to those found within the *mantra* of Śrīmad Gopāladeva, which is the displayer of all opulence.”

Commentary – “The verse beginning with “*śrīmad....*” etc. is being written to show the futility of the ritualistic processes of purifying and perfecting (i.e. *siddha* & *śodhana kriyā*) the *mantras*. In those *mantras* which are having parallel/similar potency to that found in the Gopāla Mantra.”

(ii) “*trailokya-sammohana-tantre ca, aṣṭādaśākṣara-mantram adhiṣṭya śrī-śīvenoktam—*

**“*na cātra śātravā doṣā narṇasvādi-vicāraṇā |*
ṛkṣa-rāśi-vicāro vā na kartavyo manau priye ||215||”**

Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā – “*atra asmin mantre śātravāḥ śatru-sambandhino doṣāḥ siddhādi-śodhanoktāḥ ṛṇam ca svaṁ dhanam ca tad-ādi-vicāraṇā ca na kartavyā.*”

Rendition

“In the Trailokya-sammohana Tantra too, Lord Śīva has spoken in reference to the eighteen-syllable Gopāla Mantra as such – “Herein, contemplation on the faults pertaining to the enemies, debts etc. as well as the analysis of stars and constellations is not to be done.” Sanātana’s commentary – “In this *mantra*, the analysis of faults related with the foes and which are to be cleared by **making the *mantra* perfect i.e. *siddha* (through ritualistic purification)** as well as contemplation on the debts and money etc. **are not to be done.**” (H.B .V. 1.215 & its commentary)

Remarks (RKDB) – The H.B.V. 1.211 verse cited by the contenders asserts that ‘**a mantra which is given by a woman is never to be purified by the ritualistic process**’ i.e. ‘*striyā datte.....naiva śodhayet*’. But, this is a general statement not applicable to the Gopāla Mantra as evident from the analysis of H.B.V. 213, 215 and their commentaries cited above. Factually speaking, such purifying processes are not applicable to any Kṛṣṇa *mantra* and even the major *Viṣṇu-tattva mantras* as indicated in H.B.V. 1.213. **Vaiṣṇava mantras are naturally exempt from the ritualistic processes of *siddha-śodhana-kriyā*. Therefore, the mantras indicated by H.B.V. 1.211 are not the *vaiṣṇava mantras* and esp. the Gopāla Mantra, but are the ones which belong to the other demigods and demigoddesses.** There are many *tāmasika mantras* depicted in the *tāmasika tantras* which are related to the worship of *ghora devatās* and *devīs* in the mode of ignorance like Kālī, Cāmuṇḍā, and Bhairava etc. Such *tāmasikā tantras* permit their *tāmasika mantras* to be received from a woman. **But, such a case is not applicable to the *vaiṣṇava mantras* and hence, Sunīti was not able to initiate Dhruva as verified in S.B. 4.12.32.** Again the case of *nitya-siddha* female gurus found in the early history of Gauḍīya Sampradāya is exempt from the normal rule.

Thus ends the Conclusive Stand No. 13th.

Prima Facie Contention No. 14 (BRD’s & MAD’s Stand) Section 4.3 (Page 9th of their draft) –

NEGATIVE EVIDENCE

yoṣito nāvamanyeta na cāsāṁ viśvased budhaḥ

na caiverṣyur bhavet tāsū nādhikuryāt kadācana (Hari-bhakti-vilāsa 11.708)

A wise man should not disregard, nor put faith in a woman. He should not become envious of them and **should never give them any authority or rights.** (Emphasis added.)

Conclusive Stand No. 14 (RKDB's Perspective) – The above cited verse is originally found in Viṣṇu Purāṇa 3.12.30. The Dig-darśinī commentary of Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī runs thus: : ***“nādhikuryāt adhikāraṁ na kuryāt. yad vā strībhyo 'dhikāraṁ na dadhyāt ity arthaḥ.”*** “Nādhikuryāt” means one should not appoint women or that **one should not give authority to women.**

Herein, it is to be marked that the said contenders have not cited from Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī's commentary on this verse of H.B.V. whereas, they have been very keen to quote from Śrīdhara Svāmī's commentary (on this verse of V.P. 3.12.30) just because it apparently suits their feminist stand! This also shows their prejudiced demeanour while interpreting the scriptural statements.

Śastric Advisory Council (SAC) of 2005 have mentioned the above verse on the second page of their draft submitted to the GBC in the same year. However, they have erroneously commented on the significance of this verse as follows: ***“This is a general statement. It states that women should not be given positions of authority. Of course, this authority could mean only administrative positions like kings or other heads of state. After all, being a mother is also a role of authority.”***

Remarks (RKDB) – Yes, we too accept that being a mother is also a role of authority. **But such maternal authority is not an appointed position. The status of a mother is never appointed. It is a spontaneous blood relation prevalent between the progeny and its motherhood. Whereas, the authority of being a spiritual master is a formally appointed position** (i.e. traditionally the post of a spiritual master is appointed by his own guru, other senior vaiṣṇavas or his god-brothers and following the same convention, ISKCON's spiritual masters are officially appointed by the GBC). If someone faultily claims that the Vedas have declared mother to be the greatest teacher superseding the authority of a spiritual master in the words: ***“Mātr devo bhava! (Let mother be an angel!) Pitṛ devo bhava! (Let father be an angel!) Ācārya devo bhava! (Let ācārya be an angel!) ”***, then this argument cannot withstand healthily. The opponents might say that the position of mother has been pronounced first in the sequence, thus making the maternal status highest among the hierarchy of the trio. But such a notion is untenable. Why? If, indeed mother was to the greatest among the trio, then why the adjective of the masculine gender has been used to indicate the status of a mother i.e. which is in feminine gender? There is no inconsistency with the same masculine adjective being used for modifying the statuses of father and teacher, because the terms like *‘pitṛ’* i.e. ‘father’ and *‘ācārya’* i.e. ‘teacher or spiritual master’ are also masculine. However, the term *‘mātr’* or ‘mother’ is a feminine word and the corresponding feminine

adjective synonymous to the present masculine adjective i.e. ‘devaḥ’ or ‘devo’ would be the term ‘devatā’. ‘Devo’ is in masculine whereas, ‘devatā’ is in feminine. Instead, we see the masculine ‘devo’ being used to indicate the status of a mother. Hence, it is concluded that it is actually an ācārya or spiritual master only who is indicated by other parallel terms like ‘pitṛ’ and ‘mātṛ’. So, the most significant noun in these three Vedic phrases is the ‘ācārya’. Other nouns like ‘pitṛ’ and ‘mātṛ’ are related to the ‘ācārya’. Therefore, the modifying nouns i.e. adjectives of ‘pitṛ’ and ‘mātṛ’ also follow the same masculine gender as that of the term ‘ācārya’. (In Sanskrit, normally, the adjectives follow the same gender and case as their modified nouns.) **If not interpreted so, the position of a spiritual master or an ‘ācārya’ will become insignificant in comparison to the status of ordinarily blood related mortal gaurdians i.e. biological parents and would thus contradict the bhāgavata-siddhānta.** Moreover, the injunction of Locana Dāsa Thākura found in Caitanya Maṅgala’s Madhya-khaṇḍa will also turn futile. It is described in Caitana Maṅgala as follows –

(i) *“sei se parama-bandhu sei mātā pitā / śrī-kṛṣṇa-caraṇe jei prema-bhakti-dātā //*

sakala janme pitā-mātā sabe pāya / kṛṣṇa guru nāhi mile bhajaha hiyāya //”

Rendition

“One who bestows prema-bhakti unto the lotus-like feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa is certainly to be considered as the most favourite friend, brother, mother and father. In all mortal births, everyone gets biological parents. But, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Guru are not attained in every lifetime. Hence, one should worship the Lord.”

(ii) Additionally, S.B. 11.17.27 also runs parallel to confirm the paramount status of an ‘ācārya’.

*ācāryam mām vijānīyān nāvamanyeta karhicit /
na martya-buddhyāsūyeta sarva-deva-mayo guruḥ //*

SYNONYMS

ācāryam -- the spiritual master; *mām*, -- Myself; *vijānīyāt* -- one should know; *na avamanyeta* -- one should never disrespect; *karhicit* -- at any time; *na* -- never; *martya-buddhyā* -- with the idea of his being an ordinary man; *asūyeta* -- one should be envious; *sarva-deva* -- of all demigods; *mayah* -- representative; *guruḥ* -- the spiritual master.

TRANSLATION

One should know the *ācārya* as Myself and never disrespect him in any way. One should not envy him, thinking him an ordinary man, for he is the representative of all the demigods.

>>> Ref. VedaBase => SB 11.17.27

Remarks (RKDB) – Since, *ācārya*’s status stands par excellent, the status of ordinary mother and father cannot be made comparable to it. Also, as explained earlier, since mother who is a woman, is not allotted a sacred-thread, she has not right to become an *ācārya*. Hence, when the Vedic maxims like “*mātr devo bhava*” and “*pitṛ devo bhava*” extol the glory of mother and father, such a praise is to be considered pertaining to the ‘*ācārya*’ only. An *ācārya* is manifold greater than the ordinary parents. A direct substantiation of this can be found in the M.S. 2.144-148 as follows:

(i) “*eka-deśam tu vedasya vedāṅgānyapi vā punaḥ / yo ‘dhyāpayati vṛttiyarthamupādhyāyaḥ sa ucyate //*”

“*ya āvr̥ṇotyavitatham brahmaṇā śravaṇāvubhau / sa mātā sa pitā jñeyastam na druhyet kadācana //*”

“*upādhyāyān daśācārya ācāryāṇām śataṁ pitā / sahasraṁ to pitṛṇmātā gauraveṇātiricyate //*”

“*utpādaka-brahma-dātrorgarīyān brahmadah pitā / brahma-janma hi viprasya pretya ceha ca śāśvatam //*”

“*kāmānmatā pitā cainam yadutpādayato mithaḥ / sambhūti tasya tām vidyādyadyonāvabhijāyate //*”

“*ācāryastvasya yām jātim vidhi-vad-veda-pāragah / utpādayati sāvitryā sā satyā sā ‘jarā ‘marā //*”
(M.S. 2.141, 144-148)

Rendition

“But he who for his livelihood teaches a portion only of the Veda, or also the *Āṅgas* of the Veda, is called the sub-teacher (*upādhyāya*).” M.S. 2.141

“That (man) who truthfully fills both his ears with the Veda, (the pupil) shall consider as his father and mother; he must never offend him.” M.S. 2.144

“The teacher (*ācārya*) is ten times more venerable than a sub-teacher (*upādhyāya*), the father a hundred times more than the teacher, but the mother a thousand times more than the father.” M.S. 2.145

“Of him who gives natural birth and him who gives (the knowledge of) the Veda, the giver of the Veda is the more venerable father; for the birth for the sake of the Veda (ensures) eternal (rewards) both in this (life) and after death.” M.S. 2.146

“Let him consider that (he received) a mere (animal) existence, when his parents beget him through mutual affection, and when he was born from the womb (of his mother).” M.S. 2.147

“But that birth which a teacher acquainted with the whole Veda, in accordance with the law, procures for him through the *Sāvitṛī* (i.e. *brahma-gāyatrī mantra*), is real, exempt from age and death.” M.S. 2.148

Remarks (RKDB) – M.S. 2.144 clearly states that the ‘*ācārya*’ is to be considered both the mother and father. Though the succeeding verse i.e. M.S. 2.145 considers a father to be hundred times more respectable than an ‘*ācārya*’ and a mother to be one thousand times more adorable than the father and one hundred thousand times more venerable than an ‘*ācārya*’, still by aligning the said M.S. 2.145 verse with the preceding and succeeding contexts (i.e. by alignment with M.S. 2.144 and 2.146-148), we come to the conclusion that M.S. 2.145 doesn’t talk about any ordinary mortally blood-related parents, but rather refers to an ‘*ācārya*’ by the terms like father (*pitā* and *pitṛṇ*) and mother (*mātā*). So, it is the characteristic of motherhood (i.e. the ability to give second birth to a disciple by the administration of *brahma-gāyatrī mantra*) inherent in an ‘*ācārya*’ which is to be considered 1000 times greater than the characteristic of fatherhood found in him as corroborated in M.S. 2.148. And the tendency of fatherhood (i.e. the ability to bestow the ‘*yajñopavīta*’ or a sacred thread as explained earlier in the citation of M.S. 2.140) is to be considered 100 times greater than the tendency of mere preceptor (i.e. an *ācārya* who teaches the Vedas including *Purāṇas* and *Pancarātras* as explained earlier in S.B. 11.3.47-48). **If we do not interpret congruently by matching the preceding and succeeding verses of M.S., we are bound to consider ordinary mortal motherhood as greater than the status of a spiritual master, a semblance of which is implied in the remarks of the SAC reproduced above where they have implicitly considered the status of mortal motherhood to be on an equal plane of formal authority as that of an *ācārya*.**

Thus ends the Conclusive Stand No. 14th.

Prima Facie Contention No. 15 (BRD’s & MAD’s stand) Section 4.4 (Pages 9th & 10th of their draft) –

RESOLVING THE CONTRADICTION

The compound word *nādhikuryāt* in the negative evidence directly contradicts the word *adhikāriṇāḥ* in the previous positive evidence. How to resolve this contradiction? The *Laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta* (5.327) says:

virodho vākyayor yatra nāprāmāṇyam tad iṣyate
yathāviruddhatā ca syāt tadārthaḥ kalpyate tayoḥ

An explanation of two apparently contradictory statements should leave no scope for ambiguity. Instead, an explanation which leaves no contradictions should be sought.

The *nādhikuryāt kadācana* statement in the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* which speaks against women being given authority or rights has been taken from the *Viṣṇu-purāṇa*. A closer look at the current editions of the *Viṣṇu-purāṇa* gives the original Sanskrit text of the statement in a different way that completely changes the meaning:

In the *Viṣṇu-purāṇa* editions published by two separate publishers, the same verse is found as follows,

yoṣito nāvamanyeta na cāsām viśvased budhaḥ
na caiverṣyā bhavet tāsū na dhik kuryāt kadācana (3.12.30)

A wise man should neither disregard nor put faith in a woman. He should not become envious of them and **should never curse them.** (Emphasis added.)

A simple change from *nādhikuryāt kadācana* to *na-dhik-kuryāt kadācana* (changing *na'* to *na'* and *ku'* to *kku'*) makes a world of difference in the way the verse is understood.

Some may be inclined to think that this version of *na-dhik-kuryāt kadācana* might be a recent interpolation in the *Viṣṇu-purāṇa*. However, in the commentary of *Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī* (written sometime between 1350 and 1450 AD) on this verse of *Viṣṇu-purāṇa* the alternate reading is recognized:

na dhik kuryāt dhik-kāraṇa na kuryāt (commentary on the same verse)
'*Na dhik kuryāt*' means one that should not curse them.

In this way all of the statements of *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* can be reconciled.

Conclusive Stand No. 15 (RKDB's Perspective) – **The hypocritical behaviour of the said contenders is wholly revealed at this juncture. In order to establish their biased and unreserved feminist stand, they have even resorted to put a question mark on the variation in reading (i.e. *pāṭha-bheda*) that Śrīla Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī have accepted both in the original H.B.V. and its Dig-darśinī commentary.** We can recall that in the Section 4.1 of the contenders' draft (quoted earlier), they have cited from the Bhaktivedānta Purport to C.C. 2.1.35 establishing that the Dig-darśinī commentary of Sanātana Gosvāmī should be combined with H.B.V. to bring out the factual import of the treatise i.e. H.B.V. and that Dig-darśinī supersedes in authority the original H.B.V. due to the possibility of interpolations in the original H.B.V. text. This is the opinion of SBSST as accepted by SP and also the contenders. But alas! What a sudden miracle has occurred that the same contenders have now refused to accept the reading of the H.B.V. 11.708th verse which is accepted in both the original H.B.V. and its commentary, but does not suit the stand of the feminist contenders!

The contenders have wrongly argued at the onset of Section 4.4. of their draft (quoted above) stating that there does exist a contradiction between the terms "*nādhikuryāt*" of their positive evidence (H.B.V. 11.708 & V.P. 3.12.30) and "*adhikāriṇāḥ*" of their negative evidence (H.B.V. 1.218 quoted earlier). Actually, there is no such contradiction among the two terms found in those verses. Why? Because, if we analyse the translation (as given by the contenders) of the H.B.V. 1.218, we come to know that the term "*adhikāriṇāḥ*" has been rightfully translated as the eligibility of women etc. to receive the *gopāla-mantra* in initiation. Such an eligibility or "*adhikāra*" has no contradiction with the ineligibility or "*anadhikāra*" of the women to be formally appointed as an authority. **Since, the contexts of the two verses are different (i.e. H.B.V. 1.218 talks about the eligibility in receiving initiation whereas, the H.B.V. 11.708 talks about the ineligibility for women to be given any rights of authority like that of a guru or spiritual master), there does not exist any mutual discord between the said verse and hence, there remains no necessity to introduce the L.B.A (Laghu-bhāgavatāmṛtam) 5.327.** Even if L.B.A. 5.327 is to be applied (just for the sake of an argument), it doesn't say that the readings of the texts have to be altered in order to solve those contradictions. In Mādhurya Kādambinī (M.K.), Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura has not solved the apparent contradictions appearing in two verses of S.B. (those two verses of S.B. 11.12.9 & S.B. 10.47.24 also use the same words like *vrata*, *tapasyā*, *dāna*, and *svādhyāya* etc. both in the negative and positive sense as similar to the present issue of "*nādhikuryāt*" and "*adhikāriṇāḥ*") by resorting to any variation of reading and thus taking any alternate reading of the verse to solve the discord. **Rather, VCT (Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura) has interpreted those two verses of S.B. in different contexts so that their apparently literal contradictions can be preserved as well as they do**

not come to contradict each other in essence. For more information, the 4th Anuccheda of the 1st Chapter of M.K. can be visited (it is reproduced below for referential purpose).

“kiñca “*svecchāvatāra-caritaiḥ*” iti “*svecchā-mayasya*” ityādi pramāṇa-śatairavagatena svācchāndyenāvatarato ‘pi tasya bhū-bhāra-haraṇādeḥ sthūla-dṛṣṭyā hetutve iva niṣkāma-karmādeḥ kvāpi dvāratve ‘pi na kṣatiḥ. kiñca –

**“yam na yogena sāṅkhyena dāna-vrata-tapo-‘dhvaraiḥ /
vyākhyā-svādhyāya-sannyāsaiḥ prāpnuyād yatnavān api //”** (S.B. 11.12.9)

ityādinā dāna-vratādīnām spaṣṭameva hetutva-khaṇḍane ‘pi –

**“dāna-vrata-tapo-homa japa-svādhyāya-samyamaiḥ /
śreyobhir vividhais cānyaiḥ kṛṣṇe bhaktir hi sādhyate //”** (S.B. 10.47.24)

iti yad hetutvaṁ śrūyate tat khalu jñānāṅga-bhūtāyāḥ sāttvikyā eva bhakterna tu nirguṇāyāḥ premāṅga-bhūtāyāḥ. kecit tu dānaṁ viṣṇu-vaiṣṇava-sampradānakam vratānyekādaśyādīni tapastat-prāpti-hetuko bhogādi-tyāga iti sādhana-bhaktyaṅgānyevāhuḥ. tat-sādhyatve bhakteḥ “*bhaktiḥ sañjātayā bhaktiḥ*” iti-vat nirhetukatvameva siddhamiti sarvaṁ samañjasaṁ. (Anuccheda 4th, 1st Ch., M.K.)

Rendition

“Through hundreds of scriptural statements [like *svecchāvatāra-caritaiḥ* (S.B. 4.8.57) and *svecchā-mayasya* (S.B. 10.14.2) etc.], one can understand that the Lord appears by His own will. Still, material vision may impel one to say that the need to relieve the burden of evil on the earth is the cause of the Lord’s advent. In the same way, sometimes it is said that prescribed activities (*karma*) performed without personal motives (*niṣkāma*) act as the door to *bhakti*. There is no harm in such statements, if we understand their relative nature. But yet, charities, austerities and what not are clearly denied as causes of *bhakti* as follows:

“Even though one engages with great endeavour in the mystic *yoga* system, philosophical speculation, charity (*dāna*), vows (*vrata*), penances (*tapa*), ritualistic sacrifices, teaching of Vedic mantras to others, personal study of the Vedas (*svādhyāya*), or the renounced order of life, still one cannot achieve Me.”

>>> Ref. VedaBase => SB 11.12.9

But it is also stated that charity, austerity etc. are the causes of *bhakti*.

“Devotional service unto Lord Kṛṣṇa is attained by charity (*dāna*), strict vows (*vrata*), austerities (*tapa*) and fire sacrifices, by *japa*, study of Vedic texts (*svādhyāya*), observance of regulative principles and, indeed, by the performance of many other auspicious practices.”

>>> Ref. VedaBase => SB 10.47.24

However, this statement refers to *bhakti* in the mode of material goodness. This kind of *bhakti* is actually part of the system of *jñāna*, rather than the transcendental, fully spiritual *bhakti* in the category of *prema*. Of course, some people say that charity means such *vratas* as *ekādaśī*, that *tapas* means total renunciation of personal enjoyment for the attainment of the Lord. Thus they are all *aṅgas* or limbs of

sādhana-bhakti. To say that *bhakti* (of *prema* stature) is attained by these *aṅgas* is not incorrect, for this simply means that *bhakti* (*prema-bhakti*) is caused by *bhakti* (i.e. *sādhana-bhakti*). **Thus the causeless nature of *bhakti* (*prema*) is again resolved. In this way, all points are settled.**

Remarks (RKDB) – The contenders’ argument referring to the validity of the variation of reading found in the V.P. editions published by two religious printing presses (Venkateshwar Steam Press, Bombay & Gitapress, Ghorakhpur) in India is untenable because, any variant reading not accepted by the predecessor *ācāryas* must be considered as heterodox for the followers of that lineage i.e. Gauḍīya Sampradāya. Since, SG (Sanātana Gosvāmī) and GBG (Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī) have not accepted the variant reading in H.B.V. and its commentary, it should not be highlighted. Furthermore, to render “*nādhikuryāt*” (i.e. one should not appoint or authorize) as “*na dhik-kuryāt*” (one should not curse or insult) is inconsistent because, the term ‘*dhik-kāraḥ*’ i.e. ‘reproach or reprimand’ is synonymous to the earlier used term in the verse i.e. ‘*nāvamanyeta*’ i.e. ‘one should not disrespect/insult’. The contenders’ argument that since Śrīdhara Svāmī (SS) has accepted the variant reading not accepted by SG and GBG, that variant reading can be accepted – is untenable because, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī (JG) has permitted only limited usage of SS’s commentary on Śrīmad Bhāgavatam as authentic and harmonious to the Gosvāmīs’ doctrine. The similar logic of JG is also applicable to SS’s commentaries on V.P. and B.G. through the conventional *upalakṣaṇa-nyāya* and the implicit reference to V.P. and B.G. found in the excerpted passage below.. Evidences –

(i) “*bhāṣya-rūpā tad-vyākhyā tu samprati madhya-deśātau vyāptān advaita-vādinō nūnaṁ bhagavan-mahimānaṁ avagāhayitūṁ tad-vādena karvurita-lipīnāṁ parama-vaiṣṇavānāṁ śrīdhara-svāmī-caraṇānāṁ śuddha-vaiṣṇava-siddhāntānugatā cet tarhi yathavadeva vilikhyate. kvacit teṣāṁ evānyatra-dṛṣṭa-vyākhyānusāreṇa.*” (Śrī Tattva-Sandarbhā, Anucchedas 27.1 & 27.2)

Rendition

“Śrīdhara Svāmī’s explanation of the Bhāgavatam serves as our primary commentary. Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī is a perfect *Vaiṣṇava*. But to entice the *Advaita-vādīs* (i.e. *māyā-vādīs*), nowadays prominent all over the central part of the country and elsewhere, to become absorbed in the glories of the Supreme Lord, he mixed into his writings traces of their theories. When Śrī Svāmī-caraṇa’s commentary agrees with the conclusions of pure *Vaiṣṇava* philosophy, we cite it verbatim. We base our explanation of certain Bhāgavatam verses on comments given by Śrīdhara Svāmī on other texts (like V.P. & B.G.).”

Conclusion: Even though there appears no trace of *Māyāvāda* in SS’s commentary (inclusive of the variant reading ‘*na dhik-kuryāt*’) to V.P. 3.12.30 verse quoted in H.B.V. 11.708 (under discussion and cited by the contenders), **for the said reasons, we are compelled to prefer the readings of scriptural verses accepted by JG over those of SS’s.**

Thus ends the Conclusive Stand No. 15th.

Prima Facie Contention No. 16 (BRD’s and MAD’s views)— Section 5 (Pages 11-14 of their draft) –

HARI-BHAKTI-VILASA ON RESTRICTIONS OF WOMEN AND SUDRAS

While presenting codes of behavior, *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* distinguishes between ladies who are *vaiṣṇavas* and those who are not:

***ato niṣedhakaṁ yad yad vacanaṁ śrūyate sphuṭam
avaiṣṇava-param tat tad vijñeyam tattva-darśibhiḥ*** (5.453)

Therefore, wherever restrictive statements are to be found in scriptures [regarding *śūdras* or women], those statements are understood by the learned souls as applicable to non-*vaiṣṇavas* only.

yathā—

***brāhmaṇasyaiva pūjyo 'ham śucer apy aśucer api
strī-śūdra-kara-saṁsparśo vajrād api suduḥsahaḥ
praṇavoccāraṇaccaiva śālagrāma-śilārcanāt
brāhmaṇi-gamanāc caiva śūdraś caṇḍālatām iyāt*** (5.454 – 455)

For example, the Lord says, —I am to be worshipped only by the *brāhmaṇas*, whether they are clean or unclean. The touch of the hands of a woman or *śūdra* is worse than a thunderbolt to me. If a *śūdra* utters the *praṇava* [*om*], worships the *śālagrāma-śilā*, or cohabits with a *brāhmaṇa* lady, then such a *śūdra* will attain the more degraded status of a dog-eater. *Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī* explains the mood of this verse in his detailed purport as follows:

*tad eva śrī-nāradoktyā pramāṇayati — brāhmaṇeti. satām vaiṣṇavānām śūdrānām, śālagrāme
śrī-śālagrāma-śilārcane, anyeṣām asatām śūdrānām. ataeva śūdrām adhikṛtyoktam vāyu-
purāṇe—*

***ayācakaḥ pradātā syāt kṛṣiṁ vṛtṭy artham ācaret
purāṇaṁ śṛṇuyān nityaṁ śālagrāmaṁ ca pūjayet iti.***

*evaṁ mahā-purāṇānām vacanaiḥ saha—brāhmaṇasyaiva pūjyo 'ham iti vacanasya virodhān
mātsarya-paraiḥ smārtaiḥ kaiścit kalpitam iti mantavyam. yadi ca yuktyā siddham sa-mūlaṁ
syāt tarhi cāvaiṣṇaviḥ śūdrais tādṛśibhiḥ ca strībhis tat-pūjā na kartavyā, yathā-vidhi grhīta-
viṣṇu-dīkṣākaiś ca taiḥ kartavyeti vyavasthāpanīyam. yataḥ śūdreṣv antyajeṣv api madhye ye
vaiṣṇavās te śūdrādayo na kilocyante. tathā ca nāradīye—*

śvapaco'pi mahīpāla viṣṇor bhakto dvijodhikaḥ iti

itihāsa-samuccaye—

***na śūdrā bhagavad-bhaktaṁ niṣādaṁ śvapacaṁ tathā
vīkṣate jāti-sāmānyāt sa yāti narakaṁ dhruvam iti***

pādme ca—

***na śūdrā bhagavad-bhaktās te tu bhāgavatā narāḥ.
sarva-varṇeṣu te śūdrā ye na bhaktā janārdane iti***
*etad-ādikaṁ cāgre vaiṣṇava-māhātmye vistareṇa vyaktaṁ bhāvi. kiṁ ca, bhagavad-dīkṣā-
prabhāvena śūdrādīnām api vipra-sāmyaṁ siddham eva. tathā ca tatra—yathā kāñcanatām
yāti ity ādi. etac ca prāg-dīkṣā-māhātmye likhitam eva. ata eva tṛtīya-skandhe devahūti-vākyam
[Śrīmad-bhāgavatam 3.33.6]—*

**yan-nāma-dheya-śravaṇānukīrtanād
yat-prahvaṇād yat-smaraṇād api kvacit.
śvādo 'pi sadyaḥ savanāya kalpate
kutaḥ punas te bhagavan nu darśanāt iti**

savanāya yajanāya kalpate yogyo bhavatiṭy arthaḥ. ata eva vipraiḥ saha vaiṣṇavānām ekatraiva gaṇanā. tathā ca hari-bhakti-sudhodaye śrī-bhagavad-brahma-saṁvāde—

**tīrthāny aśvattha-taravo gāvo viprās tathā svayam
mad-bhaktās ceti vijñeyāḥ pañca te tanavo mama iti**

caturtha-skandhe [Śrīmad-bhāgavatam 4.21.12] śrī-prthu-mahārāja-varṇane—

**sarvatrāskhalitādeśaḥ sapta-dvīpaika-daṇḍa-dhṛk
anyatra brāhmaṇa-kulād anyatrācyuta-gotrataḥ iti**

acyuto gotra-pravartaka-tulyo yeśāṁ vaiṣṇavānām tad vyatirekeṇa cety arthaḥ. tathā tan-mahārājasyoktau [Śrīmad-bhāgavatam 4.21.37]

**mā jātu tejaḥ prabhaven maharddhibhis
titikṣayā tapasā vidyayā ca
dedīpyamāne ṛjita-devatānām
kule svayaṁ rāja-kulād dvijānām iti**

atra śrī-svāmi-pādānām ṭikā—mahatyaś ca tārddhayaś ca tābhir yad-rāja-kulasya tejas tat tasmāt sakāśād dvijānām viprānām kule ajito devatā-pūjyo yeśāṁ vaiṣṇavānām, teśāṁ kule mā jātu prabhavet. kadācid api prabhavaṁ na karotu. kathambhūte samṛddhibhir vināpi svayam eva titikṣādibhir dedīpyamāna iti puraṇjanoktau [Śrīmad-bhāgavatam 3.26.24] ca—

**tasmin dadhe damam ahaṁ tava vīra-patni
yo 'nyatra bhūsurā-kulāt kṛta-kilbiṣas tam
paśye na vīta-bhayam unmuditaṁ tri-lokyām
anyatra vai mura-rīpor itaratra dāsāt iti**

tatrāpi saiva ṭikā—he vīra-patni yas te kṛtāparādhaḥ. tasminn ahaṁ brāhmaṇa-kulād anyatra anyasmin muraripu-dāsād itaratra ca damam dadhe, daṇḍam karomīty adi. īdṛśāni ca vacanāni śrī-bhāgavatāu bahūny eva santi. itthaṁ vaiṣṇavānām brāhmaṇaiḥ saha sāmyam eva sidhyati

kim ca—**viprād dviṣaḍ-guṇa-yutāt** [Śrīmad-bhāgavatam 7.9.10]

ity ādi-vacanair vaiṣṇava-brāhmaṇebhyo nīca-jāti-jātānām api vaiṣṇavānām śraiṣṭhyam nirdīśyatetarām. ata evoktaṁ śrī-bhagavatā śrī-hayagrīveṇa śrī-hayaśīrṣa-pañcarātre śrī-puruṣottama-pratiṣṭhānte—

**mūrtipānām tu dātavyā deśikārdhena dakṣiṇā
tad ardham vaiṣṇavānām tu tad ardham tad dvijan manām iti**

ato yuktaṁ eva likhita sarvair bhagavataḥ paraiḥ pūjya iti. tathā ca brahma-vaivarte priyavratopākhyāne dharma-vyādhasyāpi śrī-śālagrāma-śilā-pūjanam uktam—

**tataś ca vismitaḥ śrutvā dharma-vyādhasya tad vacaḥ.
tasthau sa ca samānīya darśayāmāsa tāv ubhau
nirnikta-vasanau vṛddhāvāsanasthau nijau gurū
śālagrāma-śilāṁ caiva tat-samīpe supūjitaṁ iti**

*atrācāraś ca—satām madhya-deśe 'smin viśeṣato dakṣiṇa-deśe ca mahattamānām śrī-vaiṣṇavānām
pramāṇam iti dik. evaṁ śrī-bhāgavata-pāṭhādāv apy adhikāro vaiṣṇavānām draṣṭavyaḥ. yato vidhi-
niśedhā bhagavad-bhaktānām na bhavantīti devarṣi-bhūtāpta-nṛṇām pitṛṇām [Śrīmad-bhāgavatam
11.5.41] ity ādi-vacanaiḥ. tathā karma-parityāgādināpi na kaścid doṣo ghaṭata iti tāvat karmāṇi kurvīta
[Śrīmad-bhāgavatam 11.20.9] iti, yadā yasyānugṛhṇāti bhagavān [Śrīmad-bhāgavatam 4.29.46] ity ādi
vacanaiś ca vyaktam bodhitam evāsti. (Dig-darśinī commentary on Hari-bhakti-vilāsa 5.454 – 455)*

Translation: These two verses are spoken by Sri Narada. It should be noted that *vaiṣṇavas* born in *śūdra* families have the right of worshipping the *śālagrāma-śilā*. *Śūdras* and ladies who are not *vaiṣṇavas* are barred. *Vaiṣṇavas* born in *śūdra* families have the right, as specified in the *Vāyu-purāṇa* as follows:

The *śūdra* should donate to the renunciates, work for agricultural and mercantile activities, listen to the *purāṇas* regularly, and worship the *Śālagrāma-śilā*.

Seeing the differences that the original verse has from the *Vāyu-mahā-purāṇa* and other *purāṇas*, certain envious *smārta-brāhmaṇas* consider these *purāṇic* statements to be interpolations. It is to be known that a non-*vaiṣṇava śūdra* or woman, even if fully knowledgeable in the rituals, is not to perform any deity worship. However, there are all provisions for a lady or *śūdra* who is properly initiated in a *vaiṣṇava* line. Those who are *vaiṣṇavas* amongst people born in *śūdra* or outcaste families are not to be considered as *śūdras*. This is given in the *Nāradya Purāṇa* as follows,

—O King! A *vaiṣṇava* from a dog-eating family is greater than a twice born *brāhmaṇa*.||

Also, the *Itihāsa-samuccaya* says,

—The devotees of the Lord are not *śūdras*, aborigines, or dog-eaters. One who sees them with such an ordinary caste-impelled vision certainly goes to hell.||

And the *Padma-purāṇa* says,

—Those who are devotees of the Lord are never *śūdras*. In fact, they are known as *bhāgavatas*. Those who are not *vaiṣṇavas* in all the four castes are to be known as the actual *śūdras*.||

Similar glorification of *vaiṣṇavas* has been elaborately described previously in this book (*Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*). It is proved therein that by *Vaiṣṇava* initiation, *śūdras* etc. also attain the level of a *brāhmaṇa*. The verse **yathā kāñcanatām yāti kāṁsyaṁ rasa-vidhānataḥ** (Just as bell-metal mixes chemically to produce gold, all men attain the status of a *brāhmaṇa* by the process of initiation). This was already written previously in the section describing the importance of initiations. Thus, the following statement of *Śrīmad-bhāgavatam* [3.33.6] is justified,

—To say nothing of the spiritual advancement of persons who see the Supreme Person face to face, even a person born in a family of dog-eaters immediately becomes eligible to perform

Vedic sacrifices if he once utters the holy name of the Supreme Personality of Godhead or chants about Him, hears about His pastimes, offers Him obeisances or even remembers Him.¶

The word ‘*savanāya kalpate*’ here means that such a person becomes eligible for Vedic *yajñas*. Therefore, the *vaiṣṇavas* are counted on the same level as the *brāhmaṇas*. Furthermore, in the *Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya*, the Lord says:

—Holy places, banyan trees, cows, *brāhmaṇas*, and myself — these five forms are present in the body of my devotee.¶

Also, in the *Śrīmad-bhāgavatam* [4.21.12], it is said regarding Maharaja Prithu,

—Maharaja Prithu was an unrivaled king and possessed the scepter for ruling all the seven islands on the surface of the globe. No one could disobey his irrevocable orders but the saintly persons, the *brāhmaṇas*, and the descendants of the Supreme Personality of Godhead [the *Vaiṣṇavas*].¶

Here, the word *acyuta-gotra* indicates *vaiṣṇavas* who are on the same level as those sages who originated the other *brāhmaṇa-gotras*, family lines.

Also, Maharaja Prithu himself says in the *Śrīmad-bhāgavatam* [4.21.37],

—The *brāhmaṇas* and *vaiṣṇavas* are personally glorified by their characteristic powers of tolerance, penance, knowledge and education. By dint of all these spiritual assets, *vaiṣṇavas* are more powerful than royalty. It is therefore advised that the princely order not exhibit its material prowess before these two communities and should avoid offending them.¶

Here, *Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī* comments, —Great material opulence and the royalty exhibited by those who belong to royal families should not be shown in front of those who are born in *brāhmaṇa* lineages or the *vaiṣṇavas*, the worshippers of Lord Ajita. Even a slight show should not be made. Why so? For these personalities are effulgent, even without great jewels and opulences, simply on the strength of their tolerance and austerity, etc.¶

Similarly, King Puranjana says in *Śrīmad-bhāgavatam* [4.26.24],

—O hero’s wife, kindly tell me if someone has offended you. I am prepared to give such a person punishment as long as he does not belong to the *brāhmaṇa* caste. But for the servant of Muraripu (Krishna), I excuse no one within or beyond these three worlds. No one can freely move after offending you, for I am prepared to punish him.¶

Here, too, *Srila Sridhara Swami* translates the verse in his commentary as follows, —O hero’s wife. I shall punish whosoever has offended you, except if he be a *brāhmaṇa* or a servant of Lord Krishna.¶

Similar statements are to be found in plenty in the *Śrīmad-bhāgavatam*. By this, the similarity of *brāhmaṇas* and *vaiṣṇavas* is proved. Moreover, by the verse 7.9.10 of the *Śrīmad-bhāgavatam*, it is indicated that the *vaiṣṇavas* born in castes lower than the *brāhmaṇas* are even greater than them.

Having said this, Lord Hayagriva also says in the *Hayaśīrṣa-pañcarātra, Puruṣottama-pratiṣṭhā* section, as follows,

—The worshippers of the deities should be given half of the donations, the *vaiṣṇavas* should be given half of that, and the *brāhmaṇas* should be given half of what the *vaiṣṇavas* have been given.॥

Therefore, all devotees are certainly worshipable. Furthermore, in the *Brahma-vaivarta-purāṇa*, in the narration of King Priyavrata, we find that the hunter named Dharma also worshipped the *śālagrāma-śilā*. The verse is as follows,

—And hearing their words with great amazement, Dharma the hunter stood still and saw both his gurus. Both of them were aged, dressed in fine garments, and seated on an elevated seat. In front of them, Dharma the hunter carefully worshipped the *śālagrāma-śilā*.॥

Now a description of practical conduct amongst *vaiṣṇavas* — amongst the devotees in the central and especially in the southern parts of India, it is seen that all *vaiṣṇavas* have the right to recite the *Śrīmad-bhāgavatam* and other literature. No restrictions are seen on the devotees of the Lord, since all of them are viewed under the privilege of the ***devarṣi-bhūtāpta-nṛṇām-pitrṇām*** verse from *Śrīmad-bhāgavatam* [11.5.41]. Moreover, they are not considered to be at fault for giving up their ordinary duties according to the ***tāvat-karmāṇi-kurvīta*** verse from the *Śrīmad-bhāgavatam* [11.20.9] and also according to the ***yadā yasyānugṛhṇāti bhagavān*** verse from *Śrīmad-bhāgavatam* [4.29.46].

Conclusive Stand No. 16 (RKDB’s Perspective) – The contenders have deliberately not quoted the preceding two verses viz., H.B.V. 5.451-452 – just in order to avoid illumination on the context. The context is related to allotting women and *śūdras* the eligibility to perform ritualistic worship of *śālagrāma-śilā*. **The context is not discussing about the qualifications of a spiritual master or guru. Hence, the whole prolonged discussion turns irrelevant for the present topic of Female Dīkṣā Guru (FDG) under discussion.** However, we shall later produce the relevant verses from H.B.V. 1.32-58 to show that women are barred from becoming such *dīkṣā-gurus* which involves the allotment of sacred-thread. For now, even though the whole 5th section of the contenders’ draft is irrelevant to the FDG issue, we shall still analyze it. The preceding two verses of the present context are as follows:

tathā skānde śrī-brahma-nārada-saṁvāde cāturmāsya-vrate śālagrāma-śilārcā-prasaṅge—

***brāhmaṇa-kṣatriya-viśāṁ sac-chūdrāṇām athāpi vā |
śālagrāme’dhikāro’sti na cānyeṣāṁ kadācana ||451||***

tatraivānyatra—

***striyo vā yadi vā śūdrā brāhmaṇāḥ kṣatriyādayaḥ |
pūjayitvā śilā-cakraṁ labhante śāśvataṁ padam ||452|| iti |***

Rendition

“Also, it is stated in the Skanda Purāṇa’s conversation between Lord Brahmā and Nārada within the context of worshipping *śālagrāma-śilā* during the vow of *cāturmāsya* –

“*Brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas*, and the devotee *śūdras* have a right to perform the worship of *śālagrāma-śilā*; all others are barred.” – H.B.V. 5.451

In the same Purāṇa, elsewhere it is said:

“If women, *śūdras*, *brāhmaṇas*, and *kṣatriya* etc. worship the *śālagrāma-śilā*, they attain the eternal abode.” – H.B.V. 5.452

Remarks (RKDB) – Now, if the H.B.V. 5.453-454 are taken into consideration by connecting them with the preceding verses i.e. H.B.V. 5.451-452, we reach the conclusion that all restrictive statements found in the scriptures concerning women’s (and *śūdras* also) ineligibility to perform *śālagrāma* worship are only connected with the non-*vaiṣṇava* women. **However, it is to be made clear that in the H.B.V. 5.453, Śrīla Gopāla Bhaṭṭ Gosvāmī only talks about restrictive statements in the connection to the worship of *śālagrāma-śilā*. If not so, the contextual interpretation will become damaged. In the worship of *śālagrāma-śilā*, the women and *śūdras* etc. have full rights as explained in S.B. 11.27.3-4. However, such permit of worshipping *śālagrāma śilā* for women does not indicate any *dīkṣā-guruship* for them.**
Evidence –

(i) *niḥśṛtaṁ te mukhāmbhojād yad āha bhagavān ajaḥ /
putrebhyaḥ bhr̥gu-mukhyebhyaḥ devyai ca bhagavān bhavaḥ //
etat vai sarva-varṇānām aśramāṇām ca sammatam /
śreyasām uttamam manye strī-śūdrāṇām ca māna-da //*

SYNONYMS

niḥśṛtaṁ -- emanated; *te* -- Your; *mukha-ambhojāt* -- from the lotus mouth; *yad* -- which; *āha* -- spoke; *bhagavān* -- the great lord; *ajaḥ* -- self-born Brahṁā; *putrebhyaḥ* -- to his sons; *bhr̥gu-mukhyebhyaḥ* -- headed by Bhr̥gu; *devyai* -- to the goddess Pārvatī; *ca* -- and; *bhagavān bhavaḥ* -- Lord Siva; *etat* -- this (process of Deity worship); *vai* -- indeed; *sarva-varṇānām* -- by all the occupational classes of society; *aśramāṇām* -- and spiritual orders; *ca* -- also; *sammataṁ* -- approved; *śreyasām* -- of different kinds of benefit in life; *uttamam* -- the topmost; *manye* -- I think; *strī* -- for women; *śūdrāṇām* -- and low-class workers; *ca* -- also; *māna-da* -- O magnanimous Lord.

TRANSLATION

O most magnanimous Lord, the instructions on this process of Deity worship first emanated from Your lotus mouth. Then they were spoken by the great Lord Brahṁā to his sons, headed by Bhr̥gu, and by Lord Śiva to his wife, Pārvatī. This process is accepted by and appropriate for all the occupational and spiritual orders of society. Therefore I consider worship of You in Your Deity form to be the most beneficial of all spiritual practices, **even for women and *śūdras*.**

>>> Ref. VedaBase => SB 11.27.3, SB 11.27.4, SB 11.27.3-4

The verses from Vāyu Purāṇa, Nārādīya Purāṇa, Itihāsa Samuccaya, and Padma Purāṇa as quoted in the Dig-darśinī commentary – only talk about the *śūdras* and outcastes who have become *vaiṣṇavas*. They do not talk about women at all. Even if the women are implicitly included through the *upalakṣaṇa-nyāya*, these verses are not indicating that such women can be *dīkṣā-gurus*, because the context of these verses focuses on the supremacy of *vaiṣṇavas* irrespective of their family background and seminal castes.

Again, if H.B.V. 2.12 is cited to prove that *vaiṣṇava* women can become full *brāhmaṇas*, such interpretation becomes incongruent with the tradition of *pāñcarātrika-vaiṣṇava-dīkṣā* cum *vaidika-*

upanayanam-saṁskāra as established by Śrīla Prabhupāda and SBSST. In the convention (i.e. *aitiḥya-pramāṇa* or the evidence based on tradition – considered as bona fide among the list of ten evidences) established by these revolutionary *ācāryas*, we don't find any allotment of the sacred-thread to the female candidates of initiation. So, does it mean that these *ācāryas* did not know the import of H.B.V. 2.12? No. It cannot be said so. If it cannot be said so, then why these *ācāryas* did not allow the sacred thread to be conferred on *vaiṣṇava* women? **Our resolute answer is that though the H.B.V. 2.12 affirms full brāhminical status of śūdras and outcastes (all males only, because women of all varṇas are counted separately in the śāstras as we have just seen), the female vaiṣṇavis are not considered possessing full brāhminical status because, had it been so, ācāryas like SP and SBSST would have conferred the sacred-thread onto the women disciples – something which is not seen in the evidence of customary tradition i.e. aitiḥya-pramāṇa.** Again the question arises as to why female *vaiṣṇavis* (of all varṇas and even outcastes) are not considered promoted to the full *brāhminical* status, if the *śūdras*, outcastes, and *mlecchas* etc. (all males) are given the privilege to be uplifted to the full *brāhminical* status? **The only answer based on the arthāpatti-nyāya (deductive logic) is that unlike the śūdrahood of śūdras etc., the womanhood cannot be destroyed completely. This is because, the womanhood i.e. strītvā is based on the body. Only if the female body perishes, the woman will be concurrently destroyed. Whereas, the śūdratva or śūdrahood is dependant on the guṇa, karma, and svabhāva i.e. actions, qualities, and nature etc. So, the śūdratva can be completely destroyed but not the womanhood (as explained earlier).** As the H.B.V. 2.12 verse is a very generalized pronouncement, it doesn't undergo such specifications.

tantra-sāgare ca—

**yathā kāñcanatām yāti kāsyam rasa-vidhānataḥ |
tathā dīkṣā-vidhānena dvijatvaṁ jāyate nṛṇām || 12 || -- H.B.V. 2.12**

Rendition

“Just as bell-metal mixes chemically to produce gold, all men attain the status of a *brāhmaṇa* by the process of initiation.” -- H.B.V. 2.12

Remarks (RKDB) – The quotations from S.B. 3.33.6 and H.B.S. (Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya) are irrelevant as they do not explicitly mention women. Hence, such statements cannot prove anything regarding the FDG issue. Similarly, evidences cited from S.B. 4.21.12, 4.21.37, 4.26.24, 7.9.10, 11.5.41, 11.20.9, 4.29.46, Brahma-vaivarta-purāṇa and Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra are not at all connected with the empowerment of female *vaiṣṇavis* as *dīkṣā-gurus* because the context on which Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī comments belongs to the discussion of the eligibility of women and *sūdras* for the sake of worshipping *śālagrāma śilā*. This can be ascertained by studying the beginning (*upakrama*) and the ending (*upasamhāra*) portions of his commentary cited above by the contenders. **Also, some citations mentioned above declare the supremacy of outcaste and śūdra turned vaiṣṇavas as compared to the brāhmaṇas. However, this is so because the same logic as mentioned in the H.B.V. 5.453 (cited above by the contenders) can be reversely applied (vyatireka-nyāya) too. If so applied, we come to the conclusion that only non-vaiṣṇava brāhmaṇas are to be considered lower than those śūdras and outcastes etc. who have become vaiṣṇavas. Such statements do not apply to the brāhmaṇas who are vaiṣṇavas.**

A question can arise here as to the proclamation of C.C. 2.18.121-122 which affirms the *guruship* for women and children. Evidence –

strī-bāla-vṛddha, āra 'cāṇḍāla' 'yavana' / yei tomāra eka-bāra pāya daraśana //

kṛṣṇa-nāma laya, nāce hañā unmatta / ācārya ha-ila sei, tārila jagata //

SYNONYMS

strī -- women; *bāla* -- children; *vṛddha* -- old men; *āra* -- and; *cāṇḍāla* -- the lowest of men; *yavana* -- persons who eat meat; *yei* -- anyone who; *tomāra* -- Your; *eka-bāra* -- once; *pāya daraśana* -- gets the sight; *kṛṣṇa-nāma* -- the holy name of Kṛṣṇa; *laya* -- chants; *nāce* -- dances; *hañā unmatta* -- like a madman; *ācārya ha-ila* -- becomes a spiritual master; *sei* -- that man; *tārila jagata* -- delivers the whole world.

TRANSLATION

"If they see You just once, even women, children, old men, meat-eaters and members of the lowest caste immediately chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa, dance like madmen and become spiritual masters capable of delivering the whole world."

>>> Ref. VedaBase => Madhya 18.121-122

Remarks (RKDB) – But, if we scrutinizingly study the context of these verses, we find that due to the the perfection emanating from the association with Lord Caitanya's direct physical and verbal presence (*ālokaja-kṛpā-siddhi*, *vācika-kṛpā-siddhi* & *hārdhaja-kṛpā-siddhi*) only, such unexpected promotion of women, children etc. to the platform of guruship is implied. But, when such cases of threefold *kṛpā-siddhis* are non-existent, the above cited C.C. 2.18.121-122 verses become inapplicable and hence, irrelevant. **Since, after the disappearance of the manifest pastimes (*prakaṭa-gaura-līlā*) of Gaurāṅga Mahāpabhu, there cannot be possible the extremely rare cases of *ālokaja-kṛpā-siddhi* and *vācika-kṛpā-siddhi*, the issue turns irrelevant in the modern era.** For a detailed reference to the categorical definitions of these terms, kindly refer to B.R.S. 1.3.6, 1.3.15-20 & 2.1.280-289. The above cited verses from C.C. 2.18-121-122 clearly and contextually refer to the cases of such extremely rare *kṛpā-siddhis* during the manifest pastimes of Caitanya Mahāpabhu. Evidences –

(i) *alaukika 'prakṛti' tomāra -- buddhi-agocara / tomā dekhi' kṛṣṇa-preme jagat pāgala //*

SYNONYMS

alaukika -- uncommon; *prakṛti* -- characteristics; *tomāra* -- Your; *buddhi-agocara* -- beyond our imagination; *tomā dekhi'* -- by seeing You; *kṛṣṇa-preme* -- in ecstatic love for Kṛṣṇa; *jagat* -- the whole world; *pāgala* -- mad.

TRANSLATION

"Indeed, Your characteristics are uncommon and beyond the imagination of an ordinary living being. Simply by seeing You, the entire universe becomes mad with ecstatic love for Kṛṣṇa."

>>> Ref. VedaBase => Madhya 18.120

(ii) *darśanera kārya āchuka, ye tomāra 'nāma' śune sei kṛṣṇa-preme matta, tāre tribhuvane*

SYNONYMS

darśanera kārya āchuka -- aside from seeing You; *ye* -- anyone who; *tomāra* -- Your; *nāma* -- holy name; *śune* -- hears; *sei* -- that man; *kṛṣṇa-preme* -- in ecstatic love of Kṛṣṇa; *matta* -- maddened; *tāre* -- delivers; *tri-bhuvane* -- the three worlds.

TRANSLATION

"Apart from seeing You, whoever listens to Your holy name is made mad with ecstatic love for Kṛṣṇa and is able to deliver the three worlds."

>>> Ref. VedaBase => Madhya 18.124

(iii) ***śrī-aṅga, śrī-mukha yei kare daraśana
tāra pāpa-kṣaya haya, pāya prema-dhana***

SYNONYMS

śrī-aṅga -- His body; *śrī-mukha* -- His face; *yei* -- anyone who; *kare* -- does; *daraśana* -- seeing; *tāra* -- of him; *pāpa-kṣaya* -- destruction of sins; *haya* -- there is; *pāya* -- obtains; *prema-dhana* -- the wealth of love of Godhead.

TRANSLATION

"Anyone who looks upon His beautiful body or beautiful face becomes freed from all sins and obtains the wealth of love of Godhead."

>>> Ref. VedaBase => Adi 3.65

(iv) ***emana kṛpālu nahi śuni tribhuvane
kṛṣṇa-prema haya yāñra dūra daraśane***

SYNONYMS

emana kṛpālu -- such a merciful person; *nahi* -- not; *śuni* -- we hear; *tri-bhuvane* -- within the three worlds; *kṛṣṇa-prema haya* -- one gets love of Kṛṣṇa; *yāñra* -- of whom; *dūra daraśane* -- by seeing from a distance.

TRANSLATION

"There is no one as merciful as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu within all three worlds. Simply by seeing Him from a distance, one is overwhelmed with love of Godhead."

>>> Ref. VedaBase => Madhya 16.121

Remarks (RKDB) – Hence, it is proved that C.C. 2.18.121-122 only awards *guruship* to those women and children who have received *prema-bhakti* during the manifest pastimes of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and such rarely fortunate persons are enumerated as the *kṛpā-siddhas*. **Even then, it cannot be certainly said that Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī is indicating the *dīkṣā-guruship* by the terms “*ācārya haila*” (i.e. as found in C.C. 2.18.122) for those *kṛpā-siddha* children and women, because we don’t find any precedent of contemporary *nitya-siddha* and *kṛpā-siddha* women associates/devotees of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu except for the formally undeclared *dīkṣā-guru* i.e. Jāhnavā Māta i.e. the *nitya-siddha* associate in the form of Anaṅga Mañjarī. Therefore, to conclude that the term “*ācārya*” used in**

reference to such *kṛpā-siddha* women implies only to the *vartma-pradarśaka-guruship* and *śikṣā-guruship* is not incorrect based on the harmonization with S.B. 4.12.32's Bhaktivedānta Purport.

Now the parallel excerpted citations from H.B.V. 1.32-58 and H.B.V. 2.3 shall be illustrated to prove that even *vaiṣṇavī* females are not allowed (except in an exceptional case of Jāhnavā Mātā) to be posted as *dīkṣā-guru*.

Evidences –

(i) *āgame*—

***dvijānām anupetānām sva-karmādhyayanādiṣu |
yathādhikāro nāstīha syāc copanayanāt anu ||3||*** H.B.V. 2.3

Rendition

RKDB's Translatin – “Those twice-born (*dvijas*) who have not been awarded the sacred-thread (*anupetānām*) do not have rights to perform one's prescribed duty in the form of Vedic studies (i.e. study of the four Vedas and their corollaries) but they justly get such a privilege (of Vedic studies) after having undergone the sacred-thread ceremony (*upanayanam-saṁskāra*).”

Śrīla Prabhupāda's translation – “Even though born in a *brāhmaṇa* family, one cannot engage in Vedic rituals without being initiated and having a sacred thread. Although born in a *brāhmaṇa* family, one becomes a *brāhmaṇa* after initiation and the sacred thread ceremony. Unless one is initiated as a *brāhmaṇa*, he cannot worship the holy name properly.”

>>> Ref. VedaBase => Madhya 15.108

Remarks (RKDB) – It is to be noted that Śrīla Prabhupāda has clearly affirmed that **one cannot become a *brāhmaṇa* (a full *brāhmaṇa*) unless he has a sacred-thread**. Since, women are not allotted a sacred thread, they are not full *brāhmaṇas* despite having received the *brahma-gāyatrī mantra*. **SP has also indicated in his translation of the said verse that without having a sacred thread, one cannot engage in Vedic rituals**. Hence, he has also implied the study of the four Vedas among the Vedic rituals. Vedic rituals cannot be performed without the study of the Vedas.

Dig-darśinī Tīkā of Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī – “***anupetānām akṛtopanayanānām | upanayanāt yajñopavītadānāt anu anantaram tu adhikāraḥ syād eva |***” Commentary on H.B.V. 2.3

Rendition

“The term ‘*anupetānām*’ (i.e. those who have not been adorned) indicates those who do not hold a sacred-thread (‘*akṛta-upanayanānām*’). The term ‘*upanayanāt*’ means that after the bestowal of a sacred-thread or ‘*yajñopavīta*’ (‘*yajñopavīta-dānāt*’) (‘*yajñopavīta*’ is literally defined as that thread which brings its holder closer to the performance of *yajñas*), the eligibility (for Vedic studies) is certainly achieved.” – Commentary on H.B.V. 2.3

Remarks – Since, even *vaiṣṇava* women are not and cannot be customarily allotted the sacred-thread (though they may be considered as twice-born or *dvijas* once having received initiation into the *brahma-gāyatrī mantra*), they have no privilege to undergo the study of the four Vedas and their corollaries like *Upaniṣads* etc. Now, we shall see how Sanātana Gosvāmī emphasizes on the qualification of having



undergone the Vedic studies within the criteria of analyzing the necessary requirements for *dīkṣā-guruship*. **Since, scholarship in the Vedas depends upon the eligibility to study those Vedas, those of feminine gender naturally fail to withstand the necessary requirement of Vedic scholarship for the dīkṣā-guruship.** Why? Because, *vaiṣṇavas* of feminine gender do not have the eligibility to study those Vedas having not undergone the ceremony of sacred-thread or *upanayanam-saṁskāra* as evident in the tradition as well as in the S.B. 1.4.25's Purport. Let us analyze. Evidences –

(i) (H.B.V. 1.32 & its commentary) *atha śrī-gurūpasattiḥ*

tatraiva śrī-prabuddha-yogeśvaroktau [S.B. 11.3.21]—

***tasmād guruṁ prapadyeta jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam |
śābde pare ca niṣṇātaṁ brahmaṇy upaśamāśrayam ||32||***

Dig-darśinī – “*evaṁ kāraṇam ullikhya kāryaṁ likhati—tasmād ity ādinā | śābde brahmaṇī vedākhye nyāyato niṣṇātaṁ tattvajñam | anyathā saṁśaya-nirāsakatvāyogāt |*”

Rendition

“Now, the surrender unto Śrī Guru shall be described. Therein, we find the following statement of the Prabuddha Yogeśvara (S.B. 11.3.21) –

SYNONYMS

tasmāt -- therefore; *guruṁ* -- a spiritual master; *prapadyeta* -- one should take shelter of; *jijñāsuḥ* -- being inquisitive; *śreyaḥ uttamam* -- about the highest good; ***śābde* -- in the Vedas; *pare* -- in the Supreme; *ca* -- and; *niṣṇātaṁ* -- perfectly knowledgeable; *brahmaṇī* -- (in these two aspects) of the Absolute Truth; *upaśama-āśrayam* -- fixed in detachment from material affairs.**

TRANSLATION

“Therefore any person who seriously desires real happiness must seek a bona fide spiritual master and take shelter of him by initiation. **The qualification of the bona fide guru is that he has realized the conclusions of the scriptures by deliberation and is able to convince others of these conclusions.** Such great personalities, who have taken shelter of the Supreme Godhead, leaving aside all material considerations, should be understood to be bona fide spiritual masters.”

>>> Ref. VedaBase => SB 11.3.21

Commentary – “Thus having explained the cause, the effect will now be described by the verse “*tasmād....*” etc.. ‘In the *śabda-brahman*’ means ‘**in the scriptures known as Vedas**’ (i.e. four Vedas along with the fifth Veda too). One who is logically expert (*nyāyato niṣṇātaṁ*) means one who is the **factual knower (i.e. of those Vedas – ‘tattvajñah’)**. If not so qualified, Śrī Guru remains unable to dispel the doubts (of the disciples).”

(ii) (H.B.V. 1.34-34 & their commentaries) *krama-dīpikāyām [4.2] ca—*

***vipraṁ pradhvasta-kāma-prabhṛti-ripu-ghaṭaṁ nirmalāṅgaṁ gariṣṭhaṁ
bhaktiṁ kṛṣṇāṅghri-paṅkeruha-yugala-rajorāgiṇīm udvahantam |
vettāraṁ veda-śāstāgama-vimala-pathāṁ sammataṁ satsu dāntaṁ
vidyāṁ yaḥ saṁvivitsuh pravaṇa-tanu-manā deśikaṁ saṁśrayeta ||34||***

śrutāv api [M.U. 1.2.12, Chā.U. 6.14.2]—

**tad-vijñānārthaṁ sa gurum evābhigacchet
samiṭ-pāṇiḥ śrotṛyaṁ brahma-niṣṭhaṁ |
ācāryavān puruṣo veda ||35||**

Dig-darśiṇi – “nirmalāṅgaṁ vyādhi-rahitaṁ, **veda-śāstrāgamānām** ye vimalāḥ | panthāno mārgās
teṣāṁ vettāram | satsu satāṁ mataṁ sammataṁ, vidyāṁ saṁsāra-duḥkha-taraṇādy-upāyaṁ
mantram | pravaṇā namrā vinīotā deśikaika-parā vā tanur manaś ca yasya tathā-bhutaḥ san, deśikaṁ
gurum | evaṁ pravaṇa-tanu-manastvādi śruty-ukta-samiṭ-pāṇitvādi ca gurūpasatter ādya-prakāro
jñeyaḥ” ||34-35||

Rendition

“In the Krama-Dīpikā [4.2], it is stated as follows:

“A person desirous of receiving transcendental knowledge should, with humble mind and body, approach the spiritual master who is a *brāhmaṇa* of controlled senses, possessor of uncontaminated bodily limbs, and a knower of the uncontaminated path of Vedas and Pañcarātra texts. Such a guru should have destroyed the pot full of enemies like lust etc. and should be containing the weighty devotional service characterised as that which is permeated with the love for the dust attached to the double transcendental lotus-like feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Such a spiritual master should also be recommended by the great devotees of the Lord.”

In the *Śrutis* too, it is stated as follows [M.U. 1.2.12, Chā.U. 6.14.2]:

“For receiving transcendental knowledge related to Brahman, one must approach with the sacrificial *samidh* grass held by the hand to the guru who is well versed in the *śrutis* (four Vedas – also implies the fifth Veda) and has firmly realized the Brahman.” “Only a man possessed with the *ācārya* can know (the Brahman).”

Commentary – “To be of uncontaminated limbs means to be bereft of bodily disease. **Those paths related to the *Pañcarātras* and Vedas are called ‘uncontaminated’. The knower of such paths (is the guru).** One who is approved in the assemblage of devotees is known as ‘the recommended’. Transcendental knowledge refers to the *mantra* which serves as the means to cross over mundane miseries. ‘Humble’ means the bowed down body and mind of an aspiring disciple towards his guru. ‘Teacher’ means the ‘spiritual master’. With such a submissive state of body and mind along with the *Upaniṣadic* way of holding *samidh* grass, the initial way of approaching spiritual master should be known.”

Remarks (RKDB) – Now someone can wrongly argue here that the guru required for attaining transcendental knowledge is the *śikṣā-guru* and therefore, the necessary qualifications like scholarship in Vedas etc. are not the pre-requisites for a *dīkṣā-guru*. However, such a futile doubt is eradicated because Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmi has quoted the verse of Krama Dīpikā 4.2 in his H.B.V. 1.34 to indicate the *dīkṣā-guru* because the context of the first two chapters is clearly related with the topic of *mantra-dīkṣā* or initiation. Moreover, even the bestowance of the eighteen syllable *gopāla-mantra* is to be considered as the bestowal of transcendental knowledge because, the very term ‘*dīkṣā*’ has been defined in the Bhakti Sandarbha, Anuccheda 283rd as follows:

***divyaṁ jñānam yato dadyāt kuryāt pāpasya saṅkṣayam /
tasmād dīkṣeti sā proktā deśikais tattva-kovidaiḥ //***

Rendition

"***Dīkṣā*** is the process by which one can awaken his transcendental knowledge and vanquish all reactions caused by sinful activity. A person expert in the study of the revealed scriptures knows this process as *dīkṣā*."

>>> Ref. VedaBase => Madhya 15.108

Further in the commentary to this verse in Anuccheda 283rd of the Bhakti Sandarbha, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī says as follows:

***"divyaṁ jñānaṁ hyatra śrīmati mantre bhagavat-svarūpa-jñānaṁ tena bhagavatā sambhandha-
viśeṣa-jñānaṁca."***

Rendition

"Transcendental knowledge here (in the original verse quoted above) means the knowledge of the nature of the Personality of Godhead and the related knowledge of *jīvātmā's* specific relationship with that Godhead as described in the beautiful *mantra*."

Remarks (RKDB) – Hence, to say that the transcendental knowledge can be imparted only during *śikṣā* (or the systematic teaching of scriptural knowledge i.e. *śāstra-jñāna*) and not during the process of *dīkṣā* (or initiation into the *mantra*) is quite an erroneous ideology. Even in the original Krama Dīpikā, the H.B.V. 1.34 alias K.D. 4.2 is introduced as follows:

"dīkṣāyā guru-sādhya tvādaḥ guru-lakṣaṇāṁ āha—..."

Rendition

"In order to ascertain the the availability of a factual *dīkṣā-guru*, the characteristics of such a guru are spoken of....." (then comes the K.D. 4.2 or H.B.V. 1.34)

Remarks – As it has become evident that the said verses quoted from H.B.V. 1.32 & 34-35 are ascertaining the qualifications of a *dīkṣā-guru*, a strong implication is given regarding the impossibility of a female *dīkṣā-guru* on the grounds that such a female can never attain the eligibility to study the Vedas (as elaborately described previously on numerous occasions).

Futhermore, the original author of the Krama Dīpikā (a manual of worship for the Nimbārka Sampradāya from which many quotations have been taken in the H.B.V.) is the celebrated Digvijayī Keśava Kāśmīrī Bhaṭṭācārya i.e. the impudent scholar who had challenged Mahāprabhu in a debate as described in the C.C. 1.16.25's Purport. As evident, he became the celebrated *ācārya* of the Nimbārka Sampradāya later on. He has also written his own commentary on Krama Dīpikā. We shall cite from his commentary on the K.D. 4.2 (the verse is also found in H.B.V. 1.34) –

***"punaḥ kīdr̥śam ? veda-śāstrāgama-sambandhi-vimāla-mārgāṇāṁ jñātāram anyathā āgama-śāstra-
vicārānupapatteḥ |"*** K.K.B.'s Commentary on K.D. 4.2

Rendition

“Again, of what type should be the Śrī (dīkṣā) Guru? He should be the knower of the paths related to the Vedas, failing which, there cannot be any success in analyzing the conclusions of the āgamas i.e. the pañcarātras.”

Remarks (RKDB) –Hence, it is confirmed that the import of H.B.V. 1.34 is that the said verse is only applicable to the *dīkṣā-guruship* and that it pre-necessitates the eligibility to study the Vedas as a requirement for a *dīkṣā-guru* and since, *vaiṣṇava* women are not endowed with the said rights due to a lack of sacred thread on their part, they fail to become *dīkṣā gurus*.

Now, we shall study from the more relevant quotes from H.B.V. as follows.

(iii) (H.B.V. 1.38) *atha viśeṣataḥ śrī-guror lakṣaṇāni*

mantra-muktāvalyām—

***avadātānvayaḥ śuddhaḥ svocitācāra-tat-paraḥ |
āśramī krodha-rahito vedavit sarva-śāstravit ||38||***

Rendition

“Now, the qualities of the Śrī Guru (*dīkṣā-guru*) will be specifically described. As it is stated in Mantra Muktāvalī –

“He should be born in a pure and faultless family. He should be personally pure and faultless too while always remaining engaged in one’s prescribed duties. He should be situated in a specific order of life (i.e. āśrama) simultaneously being devoid of anger. He should be totally conversant with the Vedas, nay, the whole scriptural corpus.”

Remarks (RKDB) – At times, some ISKCON devotees and leaders opine that there is no need for a spiritual master to be the knower of all major Vedic literature. But, herein the said mentality of certain contemporary devotees and leaders is fully smashed. An ideal spiritual master should be well versed in all the major scriptures found in the Vedic literature. Even SP corroborates this point in his Puports to S.B. 1.1.6-7 as follows –

“A *gosvāmī*, or the bona fide representative of Śrī Vyāsadeva, must be free from all kinds of vices. The four major vices of Kali-yuga are (1) illicit connection with women, (2) animal slaughter, (3) intoxication, (4) speculative gambling of all sorts. A *gosvāmī* must be free from all these vices before he can dare sit on the *vyāsāsana*. No one should be allowed to sit on the *vyāsāsana* who is not spotless in character and who is not freed from the above-mentioned vices. **He not only should be freed from all such vices, but must also be well versed in all revealed scriptures or in the Vedas. The Purāṇas are also parts of the Vedas. And histories like the Mahābhārata or Rāmāyana are also parts of the Vedas. The ācārya or the gosvāmī must be well acquainted with all these literatures.** To hear and explain them is more important than reading them. One can assimilate the knowledge of the revealed scriptures only by hearing and explaining. “

>>> Ref. VedaBase => SB 1.1.6

“Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is a natural commentation on the Brahma-sūtra, or the Bādarāyaṇī Vedānta-sūtras. It is called natural because Vyāsadeva is author of both the Vedānta-sūtras and Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, or the essence of all Vedic literatures. Besides Vyāsadeva, there are other sages who are the authors of six different philosophical systems, namely Gautama, Kaṇāda, Kapila, Patañjali, Jaimini and Aṣṭāvakra. Theism is explained completely in the Vedānta-sūtra, whereas in other systems of philosophical speculations, practically no mention is given to the ultimate cause of all causes. **One can sit on the vyāsāsana only after being conversant in all systems of philosophy so that one can present fully the theistic views of the Bhāgavatam in defiance of all other systems.**”

>>> Ref. VedaBase => SB 1.1.7

Remarks (RKDB) – Hence, it is to be concluded that since women are not entitled to study the Vedas and its corollaries, they cannot be made the *dīkṣā-gurus*.

(iii) (H.B.V. 1.42 & its commentary) *agastya-saṁhitāyām ca—*

***devatopāsakaḥ śānto viṣayeṣv api niḥspṛhaḥ |
adhyātmavid brahma-vādī veda-śāstrārtha-kovidah ||42||***

Rendition

“In Agastya Saṁhitā also, it is stated – “Śrī Guru should be worshipper of his *iṣṭa-deva* (i.e. cherished deity of devotion) and should be aloof from any hankering in the objects of sensual gratification. He should be the knower of spirituality having realized the Absolute Truth. **He should also be an adept in the matter of ascertaining the factual conclusions of the Vedic scriptures.**”

Dig-darśinī – “*vedādhyāpakaḥ.*”

Rendition

“(The said guru should be) **a teacher of the Vedas.**”

Remarks (RKDB) – Once again, a *dīkṣā-guru* can only be male because only he is entitled to study and teach the Vedas as per the normal rule. Here, the term Vedas implies all the five types of Vedas. Women are only entitled to study the fifth Veda i.e. Purāṇas and Mahābhārata as is verified in S.B. 1.4.28-29 in explicit terms as follows –

***dhṛta-vratena hi mayā chandāmsi guravo 'gnayaḥ /
mānitā nirvyalīkena grhitam cānuśāsanam //
bhārata-vyapadeśena hy āmnāyarthas ca pradarśitaḥ /
dṛśyate yatra dharmādi strī-śūdrādibhir apy uta //***

SYNONYMS

dhṛta-vratena -- under a strict disciplinary vow; *hi* -- certainly; *mayā* -- by me; *chandāmsi* -- the Vedic hymns; *guravaḥ* -- the spiritual masters; *agnayaḥ* -- the sacrificial fire; *mānitāḥ* -- properly worshiped; *nirvyalīkena* -- without pretense; *grhitam ca* -- also accepted; *anuśāsanam* -- traditional discipline; *bhārata* -- the Mahābhārata; *vyapadeśena* -- by compilation of; *hi* -- certainly; *āmnāya-arthaḥ* -- import of disciplic succession; *ca* -- and; *pradarśitaḥ* -- properly explained; *dṛśyate* -- by what is necessary; *yatra* -- where; *dharmādiḥ* -- the path of religion; *strī-śūdra-ādibhiḥ api* -- even by women, *śūdras*, etc.; *uta* - spoken.

TRANSLATION

I have, under strict disciplinary vows, unpretentiously worshiped the Vedas, the spiritual master and the altar of sacrifice. I have also abided by the rulings and have shown the import of disciplic succession through the explanation of the Mahābhārata, by which even women, sudras and others [friends of the twice-born] can see the path of religion.

PURPORT

No one can understand the import of the Vedas without having undergone a strict disciplinary vow and disciplic succession. The Vedas, spiritual masters and sacrificial fire must be worshiped by the desiring candidate. All these intricacies of Vedic knowledge are systematically presented in the Mahābhārata for the understanding of the woman class, the laborer class and the unqualified members of *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya* or *vaiśya* families. In this age, the *Mahābhārata* is more essential than the original Vedas.

>>> Ref. VedaBase => SB 1.4.28, SB 1.4.29, SB 1.4.28-29

The Subodhinī commentary of Vallabhācārya on this verse gives a good insight into the matter.

Subodhinī on S.B. 1.4.29 – “*bhārata-karaṇam ca dharmārthamevetyāha bhārata-vyapadeśeneti. vastutaḥ kalpa-sūtravat vedārtha-pratipādaka eva itihāsa-vācaka-śabda-karaṇam tu vyāja-mātram. tadāha bhārata iti vyapadeśa-mātram anyathā sūdrādīnāmadhikāro na syādi ti hi śabdārthaḥ. āmnāye drṣṭāntārthamukto dharmah laukiko ‘tra prayukto na to yajñādih “dhanvanniva prapāsi” ityādau yathā. ata eva vede pratipādita-dharmo na sūdrādibhiḥ jñātuṃ śakyaḥ ata tu śakyam ityāha. drśyata iti upadeśa-vyatirekeṇāpi jñāyata ityarthah.*”

Rendition

“That the compilation of Mahābhārata was done for the exposition of the path of religion is stated through the verse “*bhārata-vyapadeśena.....*” etc. Just as the Vedic Kalpa Sūtra (a corollary of the four Vedas) describes the import of the (quadruple) Vedas, in the same way, to label Mahābhārata as a history (i.e. *itihāsa*) is just a pretence (i.e. Mahābhārata is exactly like Kalpa Sūtra in describing the Vedic import; whereas, Kalpa Sūtra is directly considered as a corollary to the Vedas, Mahābhārata is generally considered to be depicting historical tales). Therefore, it is said (in this verse) that the name Mahābhārata is just a pretext (*vyapadeśa-mātram*). If Mahābhārata was not labelled as such, the *sūdras* (and women) etc. would not be considered eligible to study it. Such is the literal meaning. (*Sūdras* and women are not deemed fit to study the Kalpa Sūtras which are directly sub-parts of the Vedas.) Where (in the present verse) it is said that the *āmnāya* or the Vedic knowledge has been described (through Mahābhārata), **it should be interpreted that only the ordinary *dharmā* (as described in the Vedas) is exposed and not the specific Vedic *dharmā* of the nature of Vedic fire sacrifices etc.** similar to the notion expressed through the statement, “You should be protected like a bow.” **For the said reasons, the (specific) *dharmā* depicted in the Vedas (esp. that which is related to the performance of fire sacrifices) is not knowable for the *sūdras* etc. But that same (Vedic) *dharmā* is seen (here in M.B.) means that the same *dharmā* has been described in a bit altered way.”**

Remarks – It is an obvious fact that M.B. doesn’t describe the specific methods of performing Vedic fire sacrifices keeping in mind the readability/perusal by the *sūdras* and women etc. who, otherwise are not fit to study it. Hence, it is concluded that the whole purpose of compiling M.B. and S.B. would turn futile if the women and *sūdras* are considered fit to study the quadruple Vedas. **If someone falsely proclaims**

that *vaiṣṇava* women were allowed to study the Vedas, it is wrong to say as such. Why? Because, women irrespective of whether they are initiated *vaiṣṇavas* or not, are not given any sacred-thread without which they are unfit to study the Vedas.

Thus ends the Conclusive Stand No. 16th.

Prima Facie Contention No. 17th (BRD's & MAD's stand) – Sections 6.1 & 6.2 (Page 15th of their draft) –

OTHER *SMṚTIS* AND *ITIHASAS*

There are a number of other *smṛtis* that differ with the *Manu-smṛti* regarding women and their rights. A few examples:

WOMEN CAN CHANT *GAYATRI*

manasā bhartur-aticāre tri-rātraṁ yāvakaṁ kṣīraudanaṁ vā bhuñjānāghaḥ śayītoradhvaṁ tri-rātrād-apsu nimagnāyāḥ sāvītry-aṣṭa-śatena śirobhir-juhuyāt-pūtā bhavatīti vijñāyate (Vaiṣṇava Smṛti 21.7)

If a lady thinks ill of her husband in her mind, then she should keep barley grains for three nights in water and offer them along with flowers in sacrifice while chanting *Gāyatrī* for a hundred and eight times. Thus she becomes purified.

Conclusive Stand No. 17th (RKDB's Perspective) – No objection. Because, in ISKCON too, SP has established the tradition of allotting *brahma-gāyatrī mantra* to women (which SBSST had not introduced). But, it is to be clarified that the *brahma-gāyatrī mantra* which SP has given to his female disciples, **though originally of Vedic calibre, was made of the *Purāṇic* calibre and then allotted to the females.** So, SP's behaviour has not transgressed the prohibitive injunction of S.B. 1.4.25. Not only the *brahma-gāyatrī*, but there are many such *mantras* which are found concurrently in the Vedas and *Purāṇas* too. The form of *brahma-gāyatrī* accepted by the Gaudīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya is of *Purāṇic* calibre. When a mantra becomes *Purāṇic* or *Pāñcarātric* (from its primeval Vedic status), it overrides the Vedic status and hence becomes liberal towards women also. **But, since such is not the case with the *upanayanam saṁskāra* (i.e. sacred-thread ceremony), it cannot be allotted to women.** Though a mere reference has been made to the *upanayanam saṁskāra* for regulative and injunctive purposes in various *Purāṇas*, the specific process (containing the alternative *Purāṇic mantras* or Vedic *mantras* turned into *Purāṇic mantras*) describing the performance of the *upanayanam saṁskāra* (sacred-thread ceremony) has not been described anywhere in the *Purāṇas* unlike the process of threefold *sandhyā* rites and *brahma-gāyatrī* – which are mentioned by converting their statuses from Vedic into the *Purāṇic* ones. **Hence, the conclusion that SP has correctly given the *brahma-gāyatrī mantra* of the *purāṇic* status to the *vaiṣṇava* female disciples and that the *upanayanam saṁskāra* containing *yañopavīta* (i.e. sacred tread ceremony containing a sacred thread) cannot be given to the female *vaiṣṇavas* because Vedic *upanayanam saṁskāra* has no *Purāṇic* alternate (without undergoing which, the females do not have privilege to undergo the study of the quadruple Vedas – an attribute required for a *vaiṣṇava dīkṣa-guru* as explained earlier in H.B.V. citations) – stands 100% tenable.** The reason why SBSST did not

introduce the allotment of *brahma-gāyatrī mantra* to the *vaiṣṇava* women is because the said mantra, though is described directly in some *purāṇas*, is not referred to straightforwardly in the *Srīmad Bhāgavatam*. **But, our Śrīla Prabhupāda became quite compassionately generous and started granting the *brahma-gāyatrī mantra* to the female *vaiṣṇavas* because many other *purāṇas* (excluding S.B.) do mention that *mantra* directly. Still, SP did not deem fit to bestow the sacred-thread onto the *vaiṣṇava* women, thus indicating strict prohibition for women to have it, as also explained by the same SP in the purport to S.B. 1.4.25. This restrictive and reserved stand (of not allotting the sacred-thread to feminine gender) of SP is corroborated on the grounds that *purāṇas* and *pañcarātras* offer no alternate to the *upanayanam saṁskāra* thus retaining the said ritual as a completely Vedic rite.**



1. *Brahma-gāyatrī mantra* is originally Vedic. Because it initially appears in the Vedas i.e. *Brahma*, it is known as *brahma-gāyatrī*. Since, it also describes the Para-brahman or Absolute Truth, it is known as *brahma-gāyatrī*. Evidences –

(i) *R̥g-veda Saṁhitā*, Maṇḍala 3rd, Chapter 5th, 62nd Sūkta (Hymn), 10th Mantra (Verse). We cannot quote the exact mantra keeping in mind its secrecy applicable to the uninitiated and even for those *vaiṣṇava* women who have no right to hear the Vedic mantra. This policy will be continued henceforward while displaying references for certain secret *mantras*.

(ii) The three *mahā-vyāhṛtis* in a juxtaposition after the *omkāra* (as found in the sequence of the *brahma-gāyatrī*) have been reiterated numerous throughout the *Yajur-veda Saṁhitā*.

(iii) *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 3.12.1-5. This passage elaborately describes the attributes of *brahma-gāyatrī*. This *Upaniṣad* belongs to the last 8 chapters of the *Chāndogya Brāhmaṇa* belonging to the *Talavakāra* branch of the *Sāma-veda Saṁhitā*.

(iv) *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 4.17,1-6. This passage graphically describes the origin of the triple *mahā-vyāhṛtis* peculiar to the *brahma-gāyatrī mantra*.

(iv) *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 5.14.1-8. This passage elaborately depicts the quadruple sub-sections or feet of the *catuṣpadā brahma-gāyatrī*. The *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* belongs to the last six chapters of the *Śata-patha Brāhmaṇa* alias *Vājasaneyi Brāhmaṇa* of the *Kāṇva* branch (*śakhā*) of the white (*śukla*) *Yajur-veda Saṁhitā*.

(v) *Tripurā-tāpanī Upaniṣad*, 1.1. The whole *brahma-gāyatrī mantra* is ditto present in this *Upaniṣad*.

(vi) *Tripāda-vibhūti-mahānārāyaṇa Upaniṣad*.

(vii) *Mahānārāyaṇa Upaniṣad* alias *Bṛhan-nārāyaṇa Upaniṣad* aka *Uttara-nārāyaṇa Upaniṣad* belonging to the last chapter *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*.

(viii) *Maitrāyaṇī Upaniṣad*, 5.1-8. This *Upaniṣad* is connected to *Sāma-veda*.

(ix) *Gāyatrī Upaniṣad* 1st. This *Upaniṣad* belongs to the Chapters 31st to 38th of the *Gopatha Brāhmaṇa* of *Atharva-veda*.

(x) *Gāyatrī Upaniṣad* 2nd. This *Upaniṣad* belongs to the *Śata-patha Brāhmaṇa* of *Śukla Yajur-veda Saṁhitā*.

(xi) Gāyatī-rahasya Upaniṣad.

(xii) Sāvitṛi Upaniṣad belonging to Sāma-veda.

(xiii) Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad 4.17. This Upaniṣad belongs to the Kṛṣṇa (Black) Yajur-veda.

(xiv) Jaiminīya Upaniṣad Brāhmaṇa 4.28.1. This Upaniṣad belongs to the Talavakāra branch of Sāma-veda.

2. *Brahma-gāyatṛī* also acquires a *Purāṇic* and *smārta* (*smārta* not in the sense of a non-*vaiṣṇava* but in the sense of relationship with the *smṛtis*) status (it simultaneously retains its *śrauta* or purely Vedic status but the *śrauta* status is overridden by the *purāṇic* status) due to its numerous references found in the *Purāṇas*, M.B., and M.S. Why the Vedic status of the *brahma-gāyatṛī* gets overridden by the *Purāṇic* status? Because, the *purāṇas* and Mahābhārata can be studied even by women and *śūdras*. Evidences depicting the *Purāṇic* references –

(i) Nārada Purāṇa 1.27.43-46, 55. The *Purāṇic* form of threefold *sandhyā* rite concerned with the *brahma-gāyatṛī* is depicted in those passages. It is interesting to note that the Vedic form of the *sandhyā* ritual also exists and can be found in the various *grhya-sūtras* acting as direct corollaries to the Vedas. The *brahma-gāyatṛī* is mentioned ditto in the N.P. 1.27.57-68.

(ii) Agni Purāṇa 155.5-11 and 216.1-2, 6-8, & 16.

(iii) Garuḍa Purāṇa 1.50.10-25. Process of *Purāṇic sandhyā* and reference to *brahma-gāyatṛī* are found.

(iv) B.G. 10.35

(v) In Mahābhārata, it is mentioned as thus:

**“yathā vikaṣite puṣpe madhu grhṇanti śaṭ-padāḥ / evaṁ grhītvā sāvitṛī sarva-vede ca pāṇḍava//
tasmāt tu sarva-vedānām sāvitṛī prāṇa ucyate / nirjīvā hetere vedā vinā sāvitṛyā nṛpa //”**

Rendition

“Just as six-legged honey bees suck honey from the fully blossomed flower, in the same way, O Pāṇḍava! Extract the *sāvitṛī* (i.e. *brahma-gāyatṛī*) out of the Vedas. Hence, *sāvitṛī* is considered to be the life-essence of all Vedas, without which, the Vedas become life-less, O King!”

(vi) M.S. 2.81-83 states as follows.

**“omkāra-pūrvikāstissro mahā-vyāhṛtayo ‘vyayāḥ / tri-padā caiva sāvitṛī vijñeyaṁ brahmaṇo mukham
//**

**yo ‘dhīte ‘hanyahanyetānstrīṇi varśāṇyatandritaḥ / sa brahma paramabhyeti vāyu-bhūtaḥ kha-
mūrtimān //**

**ekākṣaram param-brahma prāṇayāmaḥ parantapaḥ / sāvitṛyāstu param nāsti maunāt satyaṁ
viśiṣyate //**

Rendition

“Know that the three imperishable *mahā-vyāhṛtis*, preceded by the syllable Om̐, and (followed) by the three-footed *sāvitrī* are the portal of the Veda and the gate leading (to) Brahman. He who daily recites that (*gāyatrī* or *sāvitrī*), without tiring, during three years, will attain (after death) the highest Brahman, move as free as air, and assume an ethereal form. The monosyllable (Om̐) is the highest Brahman, (three) suppressions of the breadth are the best (form of) austerity, but nothing surpasses the *sāvitrī*; truthfulness is better than silence.”

(vii) Tattva Sandarbha, Anuccheda 19.3 – “atra gāyatrī-śabdena tat-sūcaka-tad-avyabhicāri-dhīmahi-pada-saṁvalita-tad-artha eveṣyate **sarvesāṁ mantrānām ādi-rūpāyās tasyāḥ sāksāt kathanānarhatvāt**. tad-arthatā ca, *janmādy asya yataḥ, tene brahma hṛdā* [S.B. 1.1.1] iti sarva-lokāśrayatva-buddhi-vṛtti-prerakatvādi-sāmyāt. dharma-vistara ity atra dharma-śabdaḥ parama-dharma-paraḥ, *dharmah projjhita-kaitavo’tra paramah* [S.B. 1.1.2] ity atraiva pratipāditatvāt. sa ca bhagavad-dhyānādi-lakṣaṇa eveti purastād vyakti-bhaviṣyati.”

Rendition

“Here the word “*gāyatrī*” refers only to the meaning of *Gāyatrī* and to the single word “*dhīmahi*,” which indicates the *Gāyatrī* texts and invariably occurs within them. In this context it would be improper to utter the actual *Gāyatrī*, the primeval form of all Vedic mantras. The meaning of *Gāyatrī* is found in the phrases “from whom proceed the generation, maintenance, and destruction of this universe” and “He imparted the transcendental sound of the Vedas from within the heart.” [S.B. 1.1.1.] These two phrases express ideas identical to those contained in *Gāyatrī*: that the Supreme Truth is the shelter of all the worlds and that it is He who inspires intelligence. In the phrase “all the ramifications of religion,” the word “religion” [*dharma*] means “the supreme religion,” since the Bhāgavatam states “In this work the supreme religion is described, to the exclusion of all religion that cheats.” [S.B. 1.1.2] Such activities as meditation on the Personality of Godhead are the specific features of this supreme religion, as will be evident later.”

Remarks (RKDB) – Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī highlights that *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* embodies the purport of the sacred Vedic mantra known as *Gāyatrī*. Every twice-born *brāhmaṇa* is enjoined to chant this *mantra* at the three junctures of the day—sunrise, noon, and sunset. *Gāyatrī* is a direct expansion of the original Vedic syllable *om*, and from her expand all the other mantras; therefore she is known as the mother of the *Vedas*. There are twenty-four syllables in *Gāyatrī*, divided into three sections of eight syllables each. Like other Vedic and tantric mantras, *Gāyatrī* should be chanted only by those properly initiated into it by a representative of an authentic disciplic succession. *Sampradāya-vihīnā ye / mantrās te niṣphalā matāḥ*: “It is understood that whatever *mantras* you might chant will be fruitless if not received through a bona fide *sampradāya*.” (*Padma Purāṇa*) **Thus, as a general rule, scriptures do not give away mantras meant for the initiated by gratuitously quoting them verbatim; when citing such mantras, śāstras almost always invert or leave out some words. For this reason, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam never directly quotes the Gāyatrī mantra, either in the first verse or anywhere else in its twelve cantos. The original Brahma-gāyatrī and its variants appear nowhere in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, nor are there any verses composed in the twenty-four syllable Gāyatrī meter.** The only literal fragment of *Gāyatrī* visible in the opening verse of the *Bhāgavatam* is the one word *dhīmahi* (let us meditate).

Similarly, the other mantras allotted during the second initiation in ISKCON like the 18 syllable *gopāla mantra* etc. are originally found in the Vedas i.e. Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad 1.4. So, even the *gopāla mantra* is originally Vedic. Later on, it turns *Purāṇic* when Nārada Purāṇa 1.3.81st & 82nd chapters give an

elaborate description of the *gopāla mantra* and its variants. Subsequently, the same *mantra* attains a *pāñcarātrika* status when Brahma Saṁhitā 5.24 mentions it indirectly. **Therefore, it is concluded that both the *gopāla-mantra* and the *brahma-gāyatrī mantra* received in ISKCON are *purāṇic* and *pāñcarātrika* mantras but not the *upanayanam saṁskāra*. For the said reasons, the permission of chanting *brahma-gāyatrī* apparently seen in the Vasiṣṭha Smṛti quotation cited by the contenders is indicating the *brahma-gayatrī* of *purāṇic* status (because women have eligibility to study the *purāṇas*).**

Thus ends the Conclusive Stand No. 17th.

Prima Facie Contention No. 18th (BRD's & MAD's stand) – Section 6.3 (Page 15th of their draft) –

SAME RIGHTS IN VEDIC MANTRAS

Śrīla Madhvācārya quotes the *Vyoma-saṁhitā* in his *Brahma-sūtra-bhāṣya*_[17] (1.1.1) as follows,

āhur apy uttama-strīṇāṁ adhikāraṁ tu vaidike yathorvaśī yamī caiva śacyādyas ca tathāparā

Elevated ladies are definitely entitled to the Vedas, just like *Urvaśī*, *Yamī*, *Śaci*, etc.

Conclusive Stand No. 18th (RKDB's Perspective) – Now, the erroneous misquoting and misinterpretation of this passage by the said contenders shall be exposed. We shall quote from the edition containing Brahma-sūtra commentary by Madhvācārya and its sub-commentary by Jayatīrtha Muni (both are our previous *ācāryas* in the *guru-paramparā*) which was edited by the celebrated Mādhva scholar K.T. Pāṇḍuraṅgī and published by the Dvaita Vedanta Studies and Research Foundation - Bangalore in 1994.

(i) *vyoma-saṁhitāyām ca* -

antyaajā api ye bhaktā nāmajnanādhikāriṇaḥ / strīśūdrabrahmabandhūnāṁ tantrañjāne 'dhikāratā //

ekadeśe parokte tu na tu granthapurassare / traivarṇikānāṁ vedokte samyagbhaktimatāṁ harau //

***āhurapyuttamastrīṇāmadhikāraṁ tu vaidike / yathorvaśī yamī caiva śacyādyāśca tathā parā //* iti.**

Translation (by Prof. K.T. Pāṇḍuraṅgī).

"It is also stated in *Vyoma-saṁhitā*: "Even the low born (*antyaajas*) are eligible to acquire the knowledge of the God by reciting his name. Women, *śūdras*, and the degraded *brāhmaṇas* are eligible to acquire the knowledge through *itihāsa-purāṇa* and *tantra*. They are eligible to know the selected portions of these works. They are also eligible to receive the instructions through the learned. It is only the persons belonging to the first three *varṇas* who are eligible to study the Vedas directly. Some privileged women such as *Urvaśī* (a heavenly nymph), *Yamī* (Goddess *Yamunā*), *Śaci* (consort of Lord *Indra*) etc. are also eligible to study the Vedas."" (RKD's note: Here only the heavenly ladies are allowed to study Vedas and no mention is done to the mortal common ladies. Also the men of upper three *varṇas* are judged

according to B.G. 4.13 & S.B. 7.11.35).

Now, we shall refer to the sub-commentary of Śrī Jaya Tīrtha Muni (our previous *ācārya*) on the Madhva's same commentary.

"vyoma-samhitāyām ceti. antyajā varṇabāhyāḥ. bhaktā ityadhikāra-kathanam. tantraṁ pañca-rātrādi. adhyayanābhāvena vaidika-jñānādhikāritve 'pi trivarṇatetareṣāṁ nāmādi-jñānādhikāritvān-mokṣopapattiriti bhāvaḥ. 'sapatnīm me parādhama' ityādaḥ strīṇāmapī vedādhikāra-darśanāt katham tasāmanādhikāra iti ata uktasya apavādamāha. āhuriti. tathā parā munistriyo narādikulajāśa."

Translation (By Pāṇḍuraṅgī). "In case only those who study the Veda are eligible for *brahma-vidyā*, then, the persons who do not belong to the first three *varṇas* will be deprived of the liberation as they will have no knowledge. This doubt is removed by quoting the Vyoma-samhitā '*antyajāḥ*' i.e. the persons outside the *varṇas*. By mentioning as *bhaktā*, their eligibility is indicated. *Tantra* here means *Pañcarātra*. The persons outside the three *varṇas* are not eligible for the knowledge through the Vedas as they are not eligible to study the Vedas. However, they are eligible for the knowledge through *nāma-saṅkīrtana* etc., and therefore they can attain liberation. In the Vedic passage '*saptnīnām me parādhama*' etc., it is found that even women are eligible to study the Veda. Therefore, how is it that you say they are not eligible for the Veda? **This is answered by pointing out some exceptions by the verse i.e., women of sages and also some of the sages born among men."**

Remarks (RKDB) – So, it is clear that those women who are allowed to study only some few portions of Vedas (not all) are just not any mortal women. Mostly they are goddesses (like Śacī) and celestial nymphs (like Urvasī). Some *ṛṣi-patnīs* (wives of historical Vedic sages of yore like Gārgī and Maitreyī etc. whose names are mentioned in *Upanisads*) are also allowed. Anyways, the main point highlighted is that these are only exceptional cases. In Jayatīrtha's above quoted commentary, He uses the phrase "*.....iti uktasya apavādam āha.....*" which means that women's eligibility to study the Vedas is only found in exceptional cases since the term "*apavāda*" clearly means an "exception". Therefore, the statement of SB 1.4.25 stands final in the case of 99.99% mortal women. **The present female aspirants for dīkṣā-guruship are no exceptions as they are not in the category of Jāhnavā Mātā. Even Sunīti i.e. the mother of Dhruva Mahārāja (Sunīti was still a *sādhaka* when the S.B. 4.12.32 verse was describing her; B.R.S. 2.1.276 clearly defines the platform of *sādhaka-bhaktas* and according to Viśvanātha Cakravartī, devotees attain the status of *sādhaka-bhaktas* not during the stage of *sādhana-bhakti* but when they acquire the platform of *bhāva-bhakti*.) because was not in category of Jāhnavā Mātā (the *nitya-siddha* associate), then how can the present female candidates for *dīkṣā-guruship* strive for such positions?**

Now we shall analyse from the Bhāṣya-Dīpikā sub-commentary of Jagannātha Yati of Vyāsarāja Maṭha in Udupi. This Vyāsarāja Maṭha was established by Śrī Vyāsa Tīrtha (who is mentioned in ISKCON's pre-Mahāprabhu *paramparā*). Jagannātha Yati is in the lineage of this Vyāsa Tīrtha. He has written a sub-commentary to explain Madhva's *bhāṣya* on Brahma-sūtra (just as what Jaya Tīrtha had done). Jaya Tīrtha's and Jagannātha Tīrtha's sub-commentaries on Mādhva-Bhāṣya are considered to be the most authoritative in the Mādhva Sampradāya. Whereas Jayatīrtha's commentary is concise, Jagannātha Tīrtha's commentary is elaborate. **As we shall see, Jagannātha Tīrtha clearly restricts the pro-feminist interpretation of the śloka quoted from the Vyoma Samhitā by Madhvācārya in his Bhāṣya (as shown earlier). As we shall see, Jagannātha Tīrtha also restricts women to access the whole *Pañcarātra* and says that they are only eligible to gain access to certain portions of *Pañcarātras* and *tantras*; he also clearly prohibits women to even give lectures and explanations on *Purāṇas* and *Itihāsa* (Mahābhārata**

and Rāmāyaṇa). The following quotation is from pages 38th and 39th of Śrīmad Brahmasūtra Bhāṣyam of Śrī Madhvācārya with Bhāṣyadīpikā and Sūtradīpikā of Śrī Jagannātha Tīrtha (Chapter 1); Editor Pt. K. Sāṅkaranārāyaṇa Aḍiga and Published by Pūrṇaprajña Saṁśodhana Mandiram, Bangalore in 2008.

“tantra 'pi na sarvatrādhikārāḥ. kintu 'ekadeśe' eva. tatrāpi 'na grantha-purassare' na svaprādhānyena granthārambhe 'dhikāraḥ. kintu 'parokte' pareṇānyena parārthaṁ prokte ārabdha evetyāha - 'ekadeśa' iti. ava-dhāraṇe tu śabdaḥ. tad-vyāvartyamāḥ - 'na tu' iti. stryādimātrapuraskāreṇa prārabhyamāṇa-tantra-granthādaḥ teṣāṁ nādhikāritetyarthaḥ. anena strī-sūdrādi-mātraṁ puras-kṛtya purāṇādi-grantha-pravacanamapi na kāryamityuktaṁ bhavati. dvītiya-tu-śabdasyottaratrānvayaḥ. tarhi vedotpanna-brahma-vidyāyāṁ keśāmadhikāraḥ? pariśeṣāt trai-varṇikānāṁ cet teṣāṁ api kiṁ sarveṣāṁ adhikāraḥ? na, kim tu keśāñcidityāḥ - 'traivarṇikānāmiti'. 'vedokte' vedotpanna-brahmajñāne tu 'harau samyag-bhakti-matām' eva 'trai-varṇikānāṁ' uktetara-brahma-kṣatriya-vaiśyānāṁ adhikāritetyarthaḥ. na kevalam nāmādi-jñānādhikāra ityarthe 'pi tu śabdaḥ.

"sapatnīm me parādhama patīm me kevalam kuru" (Mantra-praśnaṁ 16.2)
ityādaḥ strīṇāmapi vedādhikāra-darśanāt katham tāsāmanadhikāra ityata uktasyāpavādamāha - 'āhuḥ' iti. turapyarthe 'pi. 'vaidike' ityasya vipariṇāmenāvṛttiḥ. 'uttamastrīṇām' iti tat-puruṣa-karmadhārayau. tathāca - na kevalamuttamānāṁ devānāṁ strīṇāṁ nāmādi-jñāne 'dhikāraḥ; kintu vaidike 'pi jñāne vedotpanna-brahmavidyāyāmapi vaidikā adhikāramāhuriti yojanā. tā udāharati - 'yathā' iti. 'eva' evaṁ 'yamī' yamasya bhāryā śyāmalā. ca śabda ukta-samuccaye. ādya-śabdena umā-ratyādi grhyate. anukta-samuccaye dvītiyaśca. **tena manuṣyādikulotpanna-deva-strīyo grhyante. tathā-śabda upamāyāṁ ukta-samuccaye vā. aparā uttama-strībhyo anyā ṛṣipatnyāḥ. avarā iti vā, uttama-deva-stryapekṣayā madhyama-ṛṣi-patnīnāṁ avaratvāditi. 'vyoma-samhitāyāṁ' iti iti-śabdānvayaḥ.**

Translation by RKDB himself (Since any Mādhva scholar's translation in English is unavailable.) Note: This Bhāṣyadīpikā sub-commentary on the Mādhva-Bhāṣya explains the verses of Vyoma-samhitā quoted originally in the Mādhva-bhāṣya. We have already explained the Tattva-prakāśikā sub-commentary by Jayatīrtha earlier. Translation of Bhāṣyadīpikā goes thus.

“Women, sūdras, and dvija-bandhus do not have full eligibility to access the whole pañcarātra/tantras; but rather their access is only limited to one particular region (eka-deśe) of those tantras. Even then, they are not allowed to study the fore-front portions (na purassare) of those tantras/pañcarātras because they i.e. women etc. do not have significance (na sva-prādhānyena). That one particular region (eka-deśa) should rather be found in the latter sections of those tantras (not in the beginning) and such particular region should be spoken by some other speaker ('parokte' - i.e. secondary speaker and not the primary speaker of that tantra and/or purāṇa. This means that just as Śukadeva is the main speaker of Bhāgavatam and others like Maitreya and Uddhava are secondary speakers.) and which is intended for some other audience -(i.e. not for the main audience which consists the tri-varṇas or brahmaṇas, kṣatriyas, and vaiśyas; but rather the secondary audience which is strī or women, sūdras, and dvija-bandhus). To indicate the sense of limitation (avadhāraṇa), the (initial) 'tu' has been used (after 'ekadeśe parokte tu na tu') and to overturn that indication, the words 'na tu' have been used. Which means that by keeping women, sūdras, and dvija-bandhus in the fore-front (puras-kāreṇa), if the recitation of the tantras is done, then the said women etc. have no right to hear them. This also means that even the Purāṇas are not to be lectured keeping in front the audience consisting women, sūdras etc. (This cannot apply to Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, Mahābhārata, and Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa which are meant for all irrespective of caste, creed and gender because S.B.'s, M.B.'s, & V.R.'s status has been established as such among the Purāṇas and itihāsas; hence, S.B., M.B., and V.R. do not have a direct mention to the brahma-gāyatrī-mantra also, keeping in mind their broader audience.) The

second 'tu' is the latter syntax. Now the question arises as to who are eligible to understand the *brahma-vidyā* (spiritual knowledge of the Vedas and *Upaniṣads*) arising out of the Vedas? If the answer is given that the remaining (*pariśeṣāt*) (remaining here means those who are not included in the trio of *strī*, *śūdra*, and *dvija-bandhus*) are fit to study *brahma-vidyā*, then the next question arises as to even within those of upper three *varṇas*, do all have qualification to study? The answer is no. But, some of them do have right to study *brahma-vidyā* (*keṣāñcid*). In the spiritual knowledge derived from Vedas, those whose devotion to Hari is fully complete and perfect (*harau samyag-bhaktimatām*), only such *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya*, and *vaiśyas* are qualified to study such *brahma-vidyā*. Such devotees from upper three *varṇas* are not only allowed to recite the holy names - in such sense also the term 'tu' has been used.

In the verse '*sapatnīm me parādhama...*' etc. the eligibility for women to study Vedas is clearly stated. If so, how can the women be considered unfit to study Vedas? In order to answer this query, the term '*āhuḥ*' has been used to indicate the exceptional rule/case (*apavādam*) (This indicates the verse of Vyoma-saṁhitā quoted in the said contenders' paper, page 15th and quoted from Vyoma-saṁhitā in Mādhva-bhaṣya.) The 'tu' (coming after '*āhuḥ*') has to be understood in this context. '*Vaidike*' has been repeated to indicate transformation. In the compound term (*samāsa*) '*uttama-strīṇām*', the *tat-puruṣa* and *karma-dhāraya samāsas* have been used. So, it is not only that the most exalted women (*uttama strīṇām*) have their rights limited to the recitation of the holy names of God, but also they have rights to enter into the *brahma-vidyā* emanating from Vedas. To exemplify this, the verse starting from '*yathā*' is introduced. In this way (*evam*), '*yamī*' means '*śyāmālā*'. '*Ca*' indicates the flock of these listed women. By the term '*ādyāḥ*', demigoddesses like Umā (i.e. Pārvatī, the consort of Lord Śiva) and Rati (the consort of Kāmadeva) are to be taken. In order to indicate those women who have not been listed (i.e. not among the three listed which are Urvaśī, Yamī and Śacī), the term '*ca*' has been used. By that, the heavenly demigoddesses appearing as human beings have to be taken. The term '*tathā*' has to be taken to mean either the listed women or in analogical sense. It can also indicate those of inferior category then demigoddesses like the wives of great sages ('*ṛṣi-patnīnām*') and the instance of this is the historical women whose names are found in Vedas and *Upaniṣads* like Maitreyī, Gārgī etc.) who are of intermediate class (not higher like the demigoddesses). In the Vyoma-saṁhitā etc., thus ends the syntax of the words."

After all, *ācāryas* like Jayatīrtha and Jagannātha Yati are not biased *smārtas* (non-*vaiṣṇavas*) that H.B.V. warns us of!

Thus ends the Conclusive Stand No. 18th.

Prima Facie Contention No. 19th (BRD's & MAD's stand) – Section 6.4 (Pages 15th & 16th of their draft) –

TWO TYPES OF LADIES

The *Hārīta-smṛti*, which is much older and broader in its outlook than the current edition of the *Manu-smṛti*, speaks about two types of women as follows,

dvividhāḥ striyaḥ. brahma-vādinyaḥ sadyo-vadhvaś ca. tatra brahma-vādinīnām upanayanam agnīndhanam vedādhyayanam sva-grhe-ca bhikṣācaryā iti. sadyo-vadhūnām tūpasthite vivāhe kathañcid-upanayana-mātram kṛtvā vivāhaḥ kāryaḥ (21.23)

There are two types of ladies — the *brahma-vādinī*, who doesn't desire to marry, and the *sadyo-vadhū*, who wishes to marry. For the *brahma-vādinī* there is provision for receiving the sacred thread, conducting the fire sacrifice, studying the Vedas, and begging alms at her own home. The *sadyo-vadhū* at the time of marriage should only be invested with the sacred thread and then married. ||

Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode makes similar points about different types of ladies:

strī-loka śuddha-bhakta ha-ile anya strī-lokake nāma vijñayera pasārī ha-ite pārena. puruṣādigake nāma dite pārena nā. tabe adhika bayaḥprāptā mānyā strī sthala-viśeṣe satarka tāra sahita puruṣa-digera nikaṭa nāma vikraya karite pārena. nāma pracāra-sthale vṛddhā o bālikā strī vyatīta sambandha-rahita anya strī-lokake kona puruṣa-pracāraka avalokana vā sambāṣaṇa karibena nā.

Women who are pure devotees can also become traveling saleswomen for distributing the holy name, but they cannot give the holy name to men. According to time, place and circumstance, and with great care and caution, mature women can distribute the holy name to men. Apart from elderly women or very young girls, men preachers should avoid discussion with women. (Godruma-kalpāṭavī)

strī-lokera gr̥hasthāśrama o sthala-viśeṣe vānaprastha vyatīta anya kona āśrama svīkartavya naya. kona āsādhāraṇa-śakti-sampannā strī vidya, dharma o sāmārthya lābha kariyā yadi brahmacarya vā sannyāsa-āśrama grahaṇa kariyā sāphalya-lābha kariyā thākena vā lābha kareṇa, tāhā sādharmaṇataḥ komalaśraddha, komalaśarīra o komalabuddhi strī jātira pakṣe vidhi nahe

Women are allowed to enter only the *gr̥hastha āśrama* and in special cases the *vānaprastha āśrama*. Although some women, being exceptionally qualified by achieving high education, expertise in understanding the scripture, and the power of abstinence, may take to the *brahmacārī* or *sannyāsi āśrama* and obtain all success, it is not the normal rule, as women are usually of weaker body, faith, and discriminating power. (Caitanya-śikṣāmṛta, chapter 2, part 4)

Conclusive Stand No. 19th (RKDB's Perspective) – The contenders' citation from H.S. 21.23 should be interpreted in the light of the commentaries of the great *ācāryas* like Jayatīrtha and Jagannātha Tīrtha whose commentaries underwent scrutinizing contemplation during the analysis of Conclusive Stand No. 18th. The above citation from Harīta Smṛti should be taken as pertaining to the extremely rare cases of exceptional women i.e. wives of great sages of yore or celibate virgins of past like Vedavatī (whose tale is depicted in many *purāṇas* and who became a *brahma-vādinī*). Hence, the norm prescribed in the H.S. 21.23 cannot be applied as a normal rule.

Regarding the contenders' quotation from BVT's Godruma Kalpāṭavī, the term '*nāma pracāra*' clearly indicates the propagation of holy names of the Lord. Thus, the *vartma-pradarśaka-guruship* and *śikṣā-guruship* are implied. **There is no indication of such women giving *dīkṣā* or initiation at all in the said citation of BVT's writing.** If we ponder over the Bhaktivedānta Purport to S.B. 4.12.32, we will find that *vartma-pradarśaka-guruship* and *śikṣā-guruship* are not prohibited for certain women *vaiṣṇavas* of exalted category. However, *dīkṣā-guruship* has been explicitly prohibited in that purport. Hence, BVT's writings should be viewed in alignment with SP's purport. Factually speaking, during the pre-Gauḍīya Mission days of SBSST (i.e. time before 1918 when Gauḍīya Mission alias Bhaktivinoda Āsana had not been established by SBSST; this indicates that BVT was not present during the establishment of Gauḍīya

Mission – the first attempt in the history to make the Gauḍīya Sampradāya institutionalized, since BVT had disappeared in 1914 and thus BVT’s compositions were all compiled before 1914) and esp. when Godruma Kalpāṭavī was compiled in 1891 AD, the system of initiation in Gauḍīya Sampradāya’s all branches (the then traditional ‘*parivāras*’) was that *hari-nāma* was not given during *dīkṣā* or initiation. In those days, *dīkṣā* did not include the *upanayanam saṁskāra* (sacred-thread ceremony), the *brahma-gāyatrī mantra*, and the Hare Kṛṣṇa *Mahā-mantra*. BVT also had not taken the *hari-nāma*, *brahma-gāyatrī*, and the sacred-thread from his *dīkṣā-guru* i.e. Vipina-vihārī Gosvāmī of Jāhnavā Parivāra (seminal line of *grhaṣṭha gosvāmīs* descending from Jāhnavā Thākuraṇī). All these were introduced for the very first time in Gauḍīya history by SBSST in the revolutionary post-1918 missionary days. **Hence, BVT has not slightly implied the allotment of Hare Kṛṣṇa Mahā-mantra in the form of initiation while writing Godruma Kalpāṭavī. BVT is explicitly indicating only the propagation of Holy name i.e. ‘nāma-pracāra’.** BVT’s ‘*nama-pracāra*’ has no mandatory connection with *dīkṣā-guruship* that we have in ISKCON i.e. two-fold viz., *hari-nāma-dīkṣā* and *gāyatrī-dīkṣā cum upanayanam saṁskāra*).

The very tone of (Caitanya Śikṣāmṛta) C.S. 2.4 naturally indicates that the whole passage is meant for extremely exceptional *vaiṣṇava* ladies who have undergone *naiṣṭhika-brahmacārya* (life-long celibacy), **thus negating the possibility for any women coming from *grhaṣṭha-āśrama* (house-holder life) and esp. the divorced women (divorce is considered illegal and a breach of conduct as per the norms of Vedic *grhaṣṭha-āśrama*).** Also, the said passage is in relation to the possibility of exceptional women’s acceptance of *naiṣṭhika-brahmacārya-āśrama* or *sannyāsa-āśrama* (this *sannyāsa* is not a formal *sannyāsa* as previously explained by us citing the excerpts from Saṁskāra Dīpikā of G.B.G.) and has no connection to the possibility for a women’s *dīkṣā-guruship*.

Thus ends the Conclusive Stand No. 19th.

Prima Facie Contention No. 20th (BRD’s & MAD’s views) – Section 6.5 (Page 16th their draft) –

WOMEN ARE NOT ON THE LEVEL OF SUDRAS

There is sometimes an idea that women are on an equal level with *śūdras* or even lower than them. *Hārīta*, too, in the same *smṛti*, rejects the idea by giving a solid argument as follows,

na śūdra-samāḥ striyaḥ. nahi śūdra-yonau brāhmaṇa-kṣatriya-vaiśyā jāyante. tasmāc-chandasā striyaḥ saṁskāryāḥ.

Ladies are not the same as *śūdras*. Why? Because it is not possible that *brahmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas* and *vaiśyas* will be born from the womb of a parent who is *śūdra*. Therefore, one must educate and initiate ladies in all sacrifices [or else they’ll become *śūdras* and there will be fear of everyone degrading into *śūdras*].

Conclusive Stand No. 20th (RKDB’s Perspective) – Women of upper three *varṇas* (not necessarily born in upper three *varṇas* but having actual qualifications of those *varṇas* too) are not on par with the *śūdras*, but also are not categorized in the same rank as the males of those upper *varṇas*. **If *Harīta Smṛti* intends to put such women in the same flock as the male members of the upper *varṇas*, its statement**

will have to be rejected to its (i.e. such statement's) explicit confrontation with the S.B. 2.7.46 and the related commentaries of *ācāryas* on that verse. Evidence –

(i) *e vai vidanty atitaranti ca deva-māyām strī-śūdra-hūṇa-śabarā api pāpa-jīvāḥ / yady adbhuta-krama-parāyaṇa-śīla-śīksās tiryag-janā api kim u śruta-dhāraṇā ye //*

SYNONYMS

te -- such persons; *vai* -- undoubtedly; *vidanti* -- do know; *atitaranti* -- surpass; *ca* -- also; *deva-māyām* -- the covering energy of the Lord; *strī* -- such as women; *śūdra* -- the labourer class of men; *hūṇa* -- the mountaineers; *śabarāḥ* -- the Siberians, or those lower than the *śūdras*; *api* -- although; *pāpa-jīvāḥ* -- **sinful living beings**; *yady* -- provided; *adbhuta-krama* -- one whose acts are so wonderful; *parāyaṇa* -- those who are devotees; *śīla* -- behaviour; *śīksāḥ* -- trained by; *tiryak-janāḥ* -- even those who are not human beings; *api* -- also; *kim* -- what; *u* -- to speak of; *śruta-dhāraṇāḥ* -- those who have taken to the idea of the Lord by hearing about Him; *ye* -- those.

TRANSLATION

Surrendered souls, **even from groups leading sinful lives, such as women**, the labourer class, the mountaineers and the Siberians, or even the birds and beasts, can also know about the science of Godhead and become liberated from the clutches of the illusory energy by surrendering unto the pure devotees of the Lord and by following in their footsteps in devotional service.

>>> Ref. VedaBase => SB 2.7.46

(ii) Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī's Bhāvārtha-dīpikā on S.B. 2.7.46 –

“te strī-śūdrādayaḥ pāpa-jīvāḥ.”

Rendition

“Those women (naturally implying women of all three upper *varṇas*), *śūdras* etc. are sinful living entities.”

(iii) Śrī Vijayadhvaja Tīrtha's (Madhva Sampradāya Commentator) Pada-ratnāvalī on S.B. 2.7.46 –

“ye strī-śūdra-hūṇa-śabarāḥ pāpa-jīvāḥ.”

Rendition

“Women, *śūdras*, *hūṇas*, and *śabaras* etc. who are all sinful living beings.”

(iii) Śrī Vallabhācārya's Subodhinī on S.B. 2.7.46.

“strī-śūdra-hūṇa-śabarā apīti. tāmaseśu striyaḥ sātṭvikyaḥ. śūdro rājasah. hūṇas tāmasah. śabarādayastato 'pyadhamāḥ. pāpenaiva jīvantīti pāpa-jīvāḥ.

Rendition

“Women, *śūdras*, *hūṇas*, *śabaras* also. Among these living beings of the *tāmasika* category, women (naturally the women of upper three *varṇas*) are on the *sātṭvika* level. *Śūdras* are on the *rājasika* level. *Hūṇas* are on the *tāmasika* level. *Śabaras* etc. are on a more degraded level than the previous

categories (i.e. on the *andha-tāmasika* level). Since, these *jīvas* live on sin (i.e. their very bodily birth is sinful), they are considered sinful living entities.”

Remarks (RKDB) – **Considering all the above commentaries on the said verse, we come to the conclusion that women of the upper three *varṇas* cannot be on par with the males of those three *varṇas*.** Why? Because, as it is generally stated in various *purāṇas*, the demigod species (*deva-yoni*) is categorized on the *sātvika* level; whereas, the homo sapiens i.e. human beings (*manuṣya-yoni*) are categorized on the *rājasika* level. The species of deceased forefathers, phantoms, demons, and *yakṣas* (*pitṛ-yoni*, *preta-yoni*, and *asura-yoni*) are all counted to be on the *tāmasika* level. Among the human beings who are classified on the *rājasika* level, the *brāhmaṇas* (male only) are considered to be on the *sātvika* level, *kṣatriyas* on the *rājasika* level, and *vaiśyas* on the *rajas-miśra-tāmasik* level. Women of the upper three *varṇas* are classified to be on the *tāmasika* level. But, among the *tāmasika jīvas*, women belong to the *sātvika* category as explained by the *ācāryas*. Now, even among the women of upper *varṇas* who fall within the *rājasika cum tāmasika cum sātvika* category, those women who are on the *brāhminical* platform are to be considered on the *rājasika cum tāmasika cum sātvika cum sātvika* category. Herein, the first ‘*rājasika*’ stands for human species, second ‘*tāmasika*’ stands for the ‘*pāpa-yoni*’, third ‘*sātvika*’ stands for the womanhood of three *varṇas* (general), and the fourth ‘*sātvika*’ stands for the *brāhminical* qualification of the women of highest category among the three types of women of upper *varṇas*. **So, all ISKCON women claiming to be on a true *brāhminical* platform should be classified as such.**

But aren’t the devotees on the level of transcendence? Yes, the devotees are transcendental but such transcendence doesn’t arise fully till the attainment of *prema-bhakti*. Only, on the stage of *prema-bhakti*, a devotee becomes fully transcendental as is evident from the analysis of C.C. 3.4.191-194. The process of acquiring transcendence commences from the very second one is initiated, but doesn’t fructify fully till the time when devotee becomes devoid of all mundane desires and becomes situated in his/her spiritual identity. Evidence –

“When a devotee no longer has any desire for material sense gratification, in his spiritual identity he engages in the service of the Lord, for his dormant spiritual consciousness awakens. This awakening of spiritual consciousness makes his body spiritual, and thus he becomes fit to render service to the Lord.”

>>> Ref. VedaBase => Antya 4.194

Remarks contd. – Such a stage can only be attained on the level of *prema-bhakti* because, subtle material contamination still continues to remain on the level of *bhāva-bhakti*. B.R.S. 2.1.276 & 280 can be referred for more analysis. If not so, Rājarṣi Bharata would not have fallen down from the level of *bhāva-bhakti* by becoming entangled with a baby deer (vide Viśvanātha’s commentary on the relevant section of S.B.). **Hence, in order to avoid hypocritical behaviour, until such a stage is attained, a devotee is considered to be situated on a mundane level, though on its last verge of waning away.**

After all, *ācāryas* like Śrīdhara Svāmī, Vijayadhvaṇī Tīrtha, and Vallabhācārya are not biased non-*vaiṣṇava smārtas* that H.B.V. warns us of!

But, Harīta Smṛti’s argument of initiating ladies in the Vedic sacrifices implying study of Vedas and sacred-thread for them, cannot be favourably sustained due to its open divergence with S.B. 1.4.25 purport’s strict remarks.

Thus ends the Conclusive Stand No. 20th.

Prima Facie Contention No. 21st (BRD's & MAD's views) – Section 6.6 (Page 16th of their draft) –

OTHER EXAMPLES OF WOMEN IN THE VEDIC AGE

The time depicted in *Rāmāyaṇa* is considered to be when the Vedic Age was at its highest point. In the *Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa*, we find the following evidence regarding ladies,

***sā kṣauma-vasanā hr̥ṣṭā nityaṁ vrata-parāyaṇā
agniṁ juhōti sma tadā mantravat kṛta-maṅgalā*** (2.17.10)

And cheerful *Kauśalyā*, who was dressed in fine silk and was dedicated to her vows, offered a fire sacrifice by uttering mantras to make everything very auspicious.

Conclusive Stand No. 21st (RKDB's Perspective) – The above also has a variant numerical appearance in most of the conventional editions of *Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa* as V.R. 2.20.15. This verse cannot be independently interpreted without the assistance of the succeeding verse i.e. V.R. 2.20.16 (V.R. 2.17.11 in the contenders' edition) as we shall find out in the analysis. Our analysis shall contain the contemplations of five prominent classical commentators on the *Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa*. Among the five commentators, only one is a bona fide *vaiṣṇava* belonging to the *Rāmānuja Sampradāya* and rest others are either *pañcopāsaka smārtas* or *māyāvādīs*. His name is Śrī Govindarājācārya and his commentary is known as the “*Bhūṣaṇa*” commentary. **We shall cite from all the five commentaries on the said two verses to prove that Mother Kauśalyā was not personally offering oblations into the fire but was inspiring the *brāhmaṇa* priests i.e. *ṛtvijas* to do it. Though Mother Kauśalyā (who is a *nitya-siddha* associate of Lord Rāma and His mother) was entitled to bypass the normal rule (i.e. the normal rule of any Vedic ritual to be performed by a married woman is that she cannot perform any Vedic rite without the accompaniment of her husband), she didn't transgress the etiquette (she was alone in her royal chamber when the fire-sacrifice was going on her behalf; Kind Daśaratha was lamenting in another part of the palace having been wickedly tricked by Kaikeyī), thus setting an example for the mandatory observance of the *strī-dharma* which is a part of the overall *varṇāśrama-dharma*.**

(i) <http://valmiki.iitk.ac.in/index.php?id=translation>

सा क्षौमवसना हृष्टा नित्यं व्रतपरायणा।

अग्निं जुहोति स्म तदा मन्त्रवत्कृतमङ्गला ॥2.20.15॥

Syntax

नित्यम् (*nityaṁ*) -- always, *व्रतपरायणा* (*vrata-parāyaṇā*) -- devoted to performing religious austerities,

सा (*sā*) -- she, *क्षौमवसना* (*kṣauma-vasanā*) -- clad in silk cloth, *हृष्टा* (*hr̥ṣṭā*) -- in delight, *कृतमङ्गला*

(*kṛta-maṅgalā*) -- having performed the rituals of auspiciousness, *मन्त्रवत्* (*mantra-vat*) – in accordance with Vedic hymns, *अग्निं* (*agnim*) -- fire, *जुहोति स्म* (*juhoti sma*) -- offered oblations.

“Always devoted in performing religious austerities, Kauśalyā clad in white silk cloth, having performed the rituals of auspiciousness, was offering oblations in delight to Agni in accordance with Vedic hymns.”

प्रविश्य च तदा रामो मातुरन्तःपुरं शुभम्।
ददर्श मातरं तत्र हावयन्तीं हुताशनम्॥2.20.16॥

Syntax

तदा (*tadā*) -- then, *रामः* (*rāmaḥ*) -- Rāma, *शुभम्* (*śubham*) -- auspicious, *मातुः अन्तःपुरम्* (*mātuḥ antaḥ puram*) -- inner apartment of his mother, *प्रविश्य* (*praviśya*) -- having entered, *तत्र* (*tatra*) -- there, *हुताशनम्* (*hutaśanam*) -- to Agni, *हावयन्तीम्* (*hāvayantīm*) -- exhorting the priests to offer sacrificial oblations, *मातरम्* (*mātaram*) -- mother, *ददर्श* (*dadarśa*) -- saw.

Rendition

“Rāma having entered the auspicious inner apartment of his mother saw his mother exhorting the priests to offer sacrificial oblations to Agni.”

Remarks (RKDB) – It is clear from the term ‘*hāvayantīm*’ i.e. ‘inspiring the priests to perform oblations’ in V.R. 2.20.16 that Mother Kauśalyā was exhorting the priests to offer sacrificial oblations into the fire. But, since it was being done on her behalf, the ‘*mukhya-nimitta-kāraṇa*’ i.e. ‘the original efficient cause’ remains Kauśalyā only. For the said reason, the term ‘*juhoti*’ i.e. ‘offered oblations’ has been harmoniously used in V.R. 2.20.15. But the apparent performers of oblations were the priests who are the ‘*gauṇa-nimitta-kāraṇa*’ or the ‘secondary efficient cause’. Another example is of the ‘*putra-kāmeṣṭi-yajña*’ which was performed by King Daśaratha for the attainment of progeny i.e. Lord Rāma. Though the apparent performer of that sacrifice was a sage known as Ṛṣyaśṛṅga, the sacrifice is attributed to Mahārāja Daśaratha. In the same way, in Mahābhārata, Pāṇḍavas were not personally doing any sacrifice. Rather, their appointed head priest i.e. Sage Dhaumya was responsible for the performance of all sacrifices. Nonetheless, King Yudhiṣṭhira was attributed for the accomplishment of those *yajñas*. The principal commentators on Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa are also in alignment with our views. Evidences –

(i) <http://valmiki.iitk.ac.in/index.php?id=govindarajiya>

(Govindarājācārya’s Bhūṣaṇa commentary. He is from Rāmānuja samradāya)

“*seti. juhوتي hāvayati. ata eva hāvayantīmिति vakṣayati. brāhmaṇairिति śeṣaḥ.*” – V.R. 2.20.15

Rendition

“*Sā* (i.e. she) etc. Offers oblations (*juhoti*) means exhorts to offer oblations (*hāvayati*). Therefore, it will be said that ‘she who was exhorting to offer’ (*hāvayantīm*). ‘Through the *brāhmaṇas*’ (she was exhorting) – should be the added part.” – V.R. 2.20.15

(ii) Amṛtakataka of Mādhavayogī (this commentary is many times referred to by Nāgojī Bhaṭṭa and Govindarāja)

“agni-hotraṃ juhōti smeti. jyeṣṭha-patnītvāḍṛtvīṇ-mukheneti śeṣaḥ. tadevoktaṃ hāvayantīmiti.” – V.R. 2.20.16

Rendition

“Had offered oblations in the *Agni-hotra*. The added part should be, “because she was the eldest queen (of Daśaratha), she was performing the rituals through the mouth of a *brāhmaṇa*. This has been implied by the term ‘*hāvayantī*’ i.e. ‘she was exhorting to offer sacrificial oblations’. – V.R. 2.20.16

(iii) Tilaka or Rāmābhirāmi (commentary by Nāgojī Bhaṭṭa).

“agnimagni-hotraṃ mantravaj-juhōti sma. jyeṣṭha-patnītvāḍ-ṛtvijeti śeṣaḥ.” – V.R. 2.20.15

“tadāha hāvayantīmiti.” – V.R. 2.20.16

Rendition

“‘Unto the fire’ (*agnim*) means ‘unto the *agnī-hotra*’ (she) was offering oblations in accordance with the Vedic hymns. It should be annexed that due to her being the eldest queen, she was performing oblations through a *brāhmaṇa*.” – V.R. 2.20.15

“This has been said through the term ‘*hāvayantīm*’. – V.R. 2.20.16

(iv) Tīrtha or Tattva-dīpa (by Maheśvara Tīrtha).

“seti. agniṃ hutotīti. brāhmaṇeneti veditavyaṃ. tadevāha hāvayantīmiti.” – V.R. 2.20.15-16

Rendition

“She (*sā*) etc. (she) Was offering oblations into the fire. It should be understood that through the *brāhmaṇas* (all this was being done). This has been said by the term ‘*hāvayantīm*’ i.e. ‘she who was inspiring the priests to offer oblations’. – V.R. 2.20.15-16

(v) Rāmāyaṇa Śiromaṇi (of Śiva Sahāya).

“seti. kṣauma-vasanā kṣumāyā atasyāḥ vikāraḥ kṣaimaṃ tad-vasanaṃ yasyāḥ sā mantra-vat mantra-viśiṣṭaṃ yathā syāt tathā agniṃ huhōti sma.” – V.R. 2.20.15

“praviśyeti. śubhaṃ māturantaḥ-puraṃ praviśya hāvayantī brahmaṇairiti śeṣaḥ. mātaraṃ dadarśa etadanurodhena pūrvatra juhōtītyasya hāvayantītyarthaḥ. atraiva svārthe ṇijvā.” – V.R. 2.20.16

Rendition

“She (*sā*) etc. She was clad with the silken robe means that she was clad with a linen which was the transformation of the Bengal San flax (this is a silk emanating from a specific plant; whereas, traditionally silk is mad from the gum of silk-worms). She was endowed with the *mantras* means that she was performing oblations into fire by possessing specific *mantras*.” – V.R. 2.20.15

“Having entered etc. Having entered the auspicious inner chamber of his mother, (he saw her as) the exhorter of sacrifices through the *brāhmaṇas* (this should be added). Such a mother He beheld. By this urging (i.e. exhorting), it means that the earlier term ‘*juhoti*’ i.e. ‘offers oblations’ should mean as ‘she who was exhorting for sacrifice’.” – V.R. 2.20.16

Thus ends the Conclusive Stand No. 21st.

Prima Facie Contention No. 22nd (BRD’s & MAD’s outlook) – Section 7.1 (Page 17th of their draft) –

THE PATH OF THE *TANTRAS*

The path propagated by the *smārta-brāhmaṇas* was a restrictive one as far as education for ladies and *śūdras* was concerned. Examples of this could be found in many places:

amantrikā tu kāryeyam strīnāmāvṛdaśeṣataḥ (*Manu-saṁhitā* 2.66)

All *saṁskāras* for ladies are to be done without any mantras.

sāvitrī praṇavam yattu lakṣmīm strī-śūdrayorneccchantī (*Nṛsimha Tāpanī Upaniṣad* 3)

Do not give *brāhmaṇa* initiation to women or *śūdras*.

However, the path of the *Tantras* and *Āgamas* was open to women and *śūdras*. The endorsement of this path by Sri Caitanya and his associates is evident from the stark contrast that the following statement shows in its attitude towards the *śūdras*:

***kībā vipra kibā nyāsi śūdra kene naya
yei kṛṣṇa-tattva-vettā sei guru haya*** (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya* 8.128)

Whether one is a *brāhmaṇa*, a *sannyāsī* or a *śūdra*—regardless of what he is—he can become a spiritual master if he knows the science of Krishna.

Srila Prabhupada makes it evident in his purport on this verse of *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* that the term ‘*guru*’ can be applied equally to *vartma-pradarśaka*, *śikṣā* and *dīkṣā* gurus.

Conclusive Stand No. 22nd (RKDB’s Perspective) – M.S. 2.66 is quite correct because, as explained earlier by us, ladies have no right to study the Vedic mantras. If some Vedic mantra acquires a *purāṇic* or *pāñcarātric* status later on, it can be allotted to women. But, since the *saṁskāras* like the *yajñopavīta saṁskāra* are not *purāṇic* (though *brahma-gāyatrī* is *purāṇic* also), it cannot be given to women. *Yajñopavīta (upanayanam) saṁskāra* cannot be applied to women because, it is a special *saṁskāra* meant only for male celibates of the upper three *varṇas* (again according to *guṇa*, *karma*, and *svabhāva*). Nowhere, in the *Purāṇas*, there is any reference found of women undergoing *upanayanam saṁskāra*. S.B. 1.4.25 Purport written by a pure *vaiṣṇava ācārya* i.e. SP – confirms this. SP was not a *smārta non-vaiṣṇava*. Neither was Vyāsadeva a *smārta*. Vyāsadeva has prohibited the entry of women into the perusal of Vedas. Vide S.B. 1.4.25. All other *saṁskāras* except for the *upanayanam* can be done for women without chanting the Vedic mantras.

As far as N.T.U. 3's restriction on the allotment of *brahma-gāyatrī* and *omkāra* to women is concerned, there is nothing wrong in it. Why? As explained earlier by us, Vedic *omkāra* and Vedic *brahma-gāyatrī* cannot be allotted to women. Only when they acquire a *purāṇic* status, can they be bestowed on the feminine gender.

If M.S. 2.66 and N.T.U. 3 are considered to be *smārta* statements (as the contenders are erroneously proclaiming), then their congenial assertion of S.B. 7.11.24 should also be perceived as a *smārta* statement! If Śrīmad Bhāgavatam is considered as a non-*vaiṣṇava smārta* literature (this is what the contenders are covetously trying to say) due to its encompassing such *smārta* statements, the foremost propagators of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam i.e. Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī also turn out to be *smārtas*! Now the deviant line of thought maintained by the said contenders shall be exposed by citing such passages from S.B. and its commentators, all of which conform with the verdicts of M.S. 2.66 and N.T.U. 3. Certainly, S.B. and its commentator *ācāryas* like Śrīdhara Svāmī and Vijayadhvaṇa Tīrtha are not *smārtas*, but they may be so according to the blindly feminist perspective of the said contenders. Evidences –

(i) ***śūdrasya sannatiḥ śaucam sevā svāmīny amāyayā /
amantra-yajño hy asteyaṁ satyaṁ go-vipra-rakṣaṇam //***

SYNONYMS

śūdrasya -- of the *śūdra* (the fourth grade of man in society, the worker); *sannatiḥ* -- obedience to the higher classes (the *brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas* and *vaiśyas*); *śaucam* -- cleanliness; *sevā* -- service; *svāmīni* -- to the master who maintains him; *amāyayā* -- without duplicity; *amantra-yajñaḥ* -- performance of sacrifices simply by offering obeisances (without *mantras*); *hi* -- certainly; *asteyaṁ* -- practicing not to steal; *satyaṁ* -- truthfulness; *go* -- cows; *vipra* -- *brāhmaṇas*; *rakṣaṇam* -- protecting.

TRANSLATION

Offering obeisances to the higher sections of society [the *brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas* and *vaiśyas*], being always very clean, being free from duplicity, serving one's master, performing sacrifices without uttering *mantras*, not stealing, always speaking the truth and giving all protection to the cows and *brāhmaṇas* -- these are the symptoms of the *śūdra*.

PURPORT

It is everyone's experience that workers or servants are generally accustomed to stealing. A first-class servant is one who does not steal. Here it is recommended that a first-class *śūdra* must remain very clean, must not steal or speak lies, and must always render service to his master. **A *śūdra* may attend sacrifices and Vedic ritualistic ceremonies along with his master, but he should not utter the *mantras*, for these may be uttered only by the members of the higher sections of society.** Unless one is completely pure and has been raised to the standard of a *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya* or *vaiśya* -- in other words, unless one is *dvija*, twice-born -- the chanting of *mantras* will not be fruitful.

>>> Ref. VedaBase => SB 7.11.24

(ii) Śrīdhara Svāmī's Bhāvartha Dīpikā commentary on S.B. 7.11.24 –

“amantra-yajño namaskāreṇaiva pañca-yajñānuṣṭhānam. tathā ca yājñavalkyaḥ. “namaskāreṇa mantreṇa pañca-yajñāna hāpayeta” iti.” – S.B. 7.11.24

Rendition

“‘Sacrifice without *mantras*’ (*amantra-yajño*) means the performance of five-fold *yajñas* simply through obeisance. Yājñavalkya also has affirmed so – “With the *mantra* in the form of obeisance (the *mantra* should be bereft of *om* and should be denoting the sense of obeisance i.e. ‘*namaḥ*’ just as instead of “*om namo nārāyaṇāya*”, it should be pronounced as “*namo nārāyaṇāya*”) the five-fold *yajñas* should not be abandoned (for the *śūdras* and women; women are included through the *upalakṣaṇa nyāya* as we shall see in the commentary of Vijayadhvaja Tīrtha).”

(ii) Śrīla Vijayadhvaja Tīrtha’s Pada-ratnāvalī commentary on S.B. 7.11.24 –

“śudrasyāntataḥ sat-prṣṭābhiradbhirācamana-lakṣaṇaṁ śaucam “hṛt-kaṇṭha-tālugābhistu yathā-saṅkhyam dvijāyataḥ śudhyeran strī ca śudraśca sakrt-prṣṭābhiranataḥ” iti vacanāt...”

Rendition

“The purification (*śaucam*) of the *śūdras* is characterised as the one which occurs lastly (i.e. sequentially last i.e. after the *brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas*, and *vaiśyas* have been purified) through the *ācamana* water which has been touched and sprinkled by the upper three *varṇas* (*sat-prṣṭābhiḥ*). It has also been said, “Finally, the women (of the upper three *varṇas* and also of the fourth *varṇa*) and *śūdras* (males) also become purified by the singular (one time) application of the water touched and sprinkled by the *dvijas*, in contrast with the *dvijas*’ (of three *varṇas*) quantitative (i.e.) performance of *ācamana* through the heart, neck, and palate.....”

The introductory statement of the contenders in this Section 7.1 gives a strong implication of the offensive mentality hidden in the feminist minds of the contenders. According to the connotation of their statement, the restrictive Vedic path propagated by Vyāsadeva in S.B. 1.4.25 was a *smārta* path and the propagator of that *smārta* path i.e. Vyāsadeva was a *smārta* too!

As far as the citation of C.C. 2.8.128 is concerned, it is totally irrelevant in the current context, because the concept of the inclusion of feminine gender is absent from the purport of SP to that verse. SP has not mentioned the feminine gender at all in the purport to that verse. Even if SP would have mentioned the feminine gender in relation that verse in some of his lectures, conversations etc., still the precisely specific nature of the S.B. 4.12.32’s Bhaktivedānta Purport would clarify the intention of the inclusion of feminine gender in a discourse or conversation of SP pertaining to the C.C. 2.8.128 verse. In S.B. 4.12.32, it is clarified that a woman cannot become a *dīkṣā-guru*, though having rights to assume the posts of a *vartma-pradarśaka guru* and a *śikṣā-guru*. Also, the doubt that such an interpretation would override the hierarchical calculation of evidences (i.e. if C.C. is higher than S.B., then why is S.B. 4.12.32’s purport taken to override/clarify the C.C.2.8.128’s purport?) goes in vain because, if SP would have mentioned feminine gender at all in the very purport to C.C. 2.8.128, then only would it (i.e. the concept of the inclusion of feminine gender in context to C.C. 2.8.128) have been considered as overriding the purport to S.B. 4.12.32; but, contrastingly we find that the inclusion of feminine gender has been done only in certain lectures and conversations revolving around C.C. 2.8.128, thus making such an inclusion counted in the category of 2nd and 4th class evidences i.e. lectures are evidences of the 2nd class category whereas, private conversations (except formal conversations like the May 28th, 1977 conversation in Vṛndāvana with all the G.B.C.s and B.B.T. trustees) are evidences of the 4th class category. Hence, any inclusion of feminine gender during the discourses and conversations pertaining to C.C. 2.8.128 would be counted as hierarchically lower than

the S.B. 4.12.32's purport's specific analysis. For the said reason, the contenders' arguments are to be rejected.

Thus ends the Conclusive Stand No. 22nd.

Prima Facie Contention No. 23rd (BRD's & MAD's outlook) – Sections 7.2 & 7.3 (Pages 17th & 18th of their draft) –

THE *TANTRAS* ARE A BONAFIDE WAY OF WORSHIPING THE LORD

Some *vaiṣṇavas* cringe upon hearing the word '*tantra*', associating the term with ritualistic drinking of alcohol and performance of ritualistic sex. In the *Śrīmad-bhāgavatam*, however, Krishna clarifies the situation:

***vaidikas tāntriko miśra iti me tri-vidho makhaḥ
trayāṇām īpsitenaiva vidhinā mām samarcaret*** (11.27.7)

One should carefully worship me by selecting one of the three methods by which I receive sacrifice: *Vedic*, *tāntric*, or mixed.

THE PATH OF THE *TANTRAS* IS MORE PROMINENT IN *KALI YUGA*

The *Śrīmad-bhāgavatam* also says:

***taṁ tadā puruṣaṁ martyā mahā-rājopalakṣaṇam
yajanti veda-tantrābhyām paraṁ jijñāsavo nṛpa
īti dvāpara urv īśa stuvanti jagad-īśvaram
nānā-tantra-vidhānena kalāv api tathā śṛṇu*** (11.5.28, 30)

My dear King, in *Dvāpara-yuga*, men who desire to know the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the supreme enjoyer, worship him in the mood of honoring a great king, following the prescriptions of both the Vedas and *tantras*. O King, in this way people in *Dvāpara-yuga* glorified the Lord of the universe. In *Kali-yuga* also, people worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead by following various regulations of the *tantras* (revealed scriptures). 18

Srila Sridhara Swami says in his commentary on this verse:

nānā-tantra-vidhāneneti kalau tantra-mārgasya prādhānyaṁ darśayati

By the word *nānā-tantra-vidhānena* in the verse, the predominance of the path of *tantras* [over the Vedic Path] is shown in *Kali-yuga*.

It is therefore not surprising that in the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* many *tāntric* scriptures are quoted.

A partial list is as follows:

Viṣṇu-yāmala-tantra (quoted in 2.6 etc.)
Nārada-tantra (quoted in 2.23 etc.)

Rūdra-yāmala-tantra (quoted in 2.29 etc.)
Gautamīya-tantra (quoted in 1.170 etc.)
Trailokya-sammohana-tantra (quoted in 1.179 etc.)
Sammohana-tantra (quoted in 2.147, 2.185 etc.)
Sanat-kumāra-tantra (quoted in 11.57 etc.)
Bhāgavata-tantra (quoted in 12.376 etc.)

Conclusive Stand No. 23rd (RKDB's Perspective) – Since *upanayanaṁ saṁskāra* is a purely Vedic ceremony, it is not seen allotted to women (i.e. women do not have sacred thread in ISKCON) as per the injunctions of S.B. 1.4.25 and its purport (again, S.B. 1.4.25's purport is now written by a non-*vaiṣṇava smārta*). Hence, it is to be concluded that the post-SBSST Gauḍīya lineage is following the mixed way of worshipping the Lord i.e. the '*miśra*' as termed in the S.B. 11.27.7 verse. Also, since all *pāñcarātri*ka texts do not mention the occupational duties of the *varṇāśrama-dharma* (i.e. a topic exclusively reserved to the Vedas and *Purāṇas*), the concept of DVAD (i.e. *daiva-varṇāśrama-dharma*) has to be considered to be pertaining to the Vedas only. Evidence –

(i) *yadā sva-nigamenoktaṁ dvijatvaṁ prāpya pūruṣaḥ /*
yathā yajeta mām bhaktyā śraddhayā tan nibodha me //

SYNONYMS

yadā -- when; *sva* -- specified according to one's qualification; *nigamena* -- by the Vedas; *uktam* -- enjoined; *dvijatvam* -- the status of becoming twice-born; *prāpya* -- achieving; *pūruṣaḥ* -- a person; *yathā* -- in which way; *yajeta* -- he should execute worship; *mām* -- unto Me; *bhaktyā* -- with devotion; *śraddhayā* -- with faith; *tat* -- that; *nibodha* -- please hear; *me* -- from Me.

TRANSLATION

Now please listen faithfully as I explain exactly how a person who has achieved twice-born status through the relevant Vedic prescriptions should worship Me with devotion.

PURPORT

The word *sva-nigamena* refers to the particular Vedic injunctions relevant to one's social and occupational status. Members of the *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya* and *vaiśya* communities all achieve *dvijatvam*, twice-born status, by initiation into the *Gayatrī mantra*. Traditionally, fully qualified *brāhmaṇa* boys may be initiated at age eight, *kṣatriyas* at eleven and *vaiśyas* at twelve, provided the proper conditions are met. Having achieved twice-born status, one should faithfully worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His form of the Deity, as the Lord Himself will describe.

>>> Ref. VedaBase => SB 11.27.8

Remarks (RKDB) – Due to the inclusion of the DVAD concept (i.e. most importantly the aspect of *upanayanaṁ saṁskāra*) in the post-SBSST Gauḍīya line, we are bound to conclude that a mixed way of worshipping the Lord is being followed i.e. Vedic and *Pāñcarātri*ka methods are conjoined. Though the path of the *tantras* is more prominent in Kali Yuga, the Vedic path has not been rejected wholly in the post-SBSST Gauḍīya line. Even the pre-SBSST Gauḍīya lineage does not exclude the path of Vedas. Or else, Śrīla Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī would not have included the verses (of Ṛg-veda Saṁhitā 1.22.20, the Kṛṣṇa Upaniṣad of Ṛg-veda, the Puruṣa-sūkta-mantras from the Kṛṣṇa Yajur-veda, the Nārāyaṇātharva-śiṛṣa from Atharva-veda, and the Nārāyaṇa-sūkta from the Śukla Yajur-veda) in the

Maṅgalācaraṇa section of the ritualistic division (i.e. the second half of S.K.S.D. since the first half is majorly philosophical) which are as follows –

(i) “om tad viṣṇoḥ paramaṁ padaṁ sadā paśyanti sūrayaḥ— divīva cakṣur ātatam”

Rendition

"Just as the sun's rays in the sky are extended to the mundane vision, so in the same way the wise and learned devotees always see the abode of Lord Viṣṇu." – taken from Ṛg Veda 1.22.20.

“tad viprāso vipanyavo jāgrvam saḥ samindhate— viṣṇor yat paramaṁ padam”

Rendition

"Because those highly praiseworthy and spiritually awake devotees are able to see the spiritual world, they are also able to reveal that supreme abode of Lord Viṣṇu." - Ṛg Veda 1.22.20

(ii) “om kṛṣṇo vai saccidānanda-ghanah kṛṣṇa ādi-puruṣaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ puruṣottamaḥ kṛṣṇo hā u karmādi-mūlaṁ kṛṣṇaḥ sa ha sarvai kāryaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ kāśaṁkṛdādīśa-mukha-prabhu-pūjyaḥ kṛṣṇo ‘nādistasminnajāṇḍāntar-bāhye yan-maṅgalaṁ tal-labhate kṛtī.” – taken from Kṛṣṇa Upaniṣad of Ṛg-veda.

Rendition

"Lord Krishna is of the colour of a new rain cloud, therefore He is compared to a transcendental cloud full of eternity, bliss and cognizance. He is the original and supreme person. He is the origin of all activities and the one and only Lord of all. He is the worshipful Lord of the best of demigods, the controller of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. Kṛṣṇa is without any beginning. Whatever auspiciousness is found within or beyond this universe the devotee obtains in Krishna alone" (Ṛg Veda, Kṛṣṇa Upaniṣad)

(iii) The sixteen *mantras* of Puruṣa-sūkta taken from Kṛṣṇa Yajur-veda Saṁhitā.

(iv) The six *mantras* of Nārāyaṇa Sūktra from Śukla Yajur Veda.

(v) The svasti-vācana – **“Om svasti no govindaḥ svasti no 'cyutānantau svasti no vasudevo viṣṇur dadhātu. svasti no nārāyaṇo naro vai svasti naḥ padmanābhaḥ puruṣottamo dadhātu. svasti no viśakseno viśveśvaraḥ svasti no hr̥ṣīkeśo harir dadhātu. svasti no vinateyo hariḥ svasti no 'njanā-suto hanur bhāgavato dadhātu. svasti svasti sumangalaiḥ keśo mahān śrī-kṛṣṇaḥ sac-cid-ānanda-ghanah sarveśvareśvaro dadhātu.”**

Rendition

"May Lord Govinda, Acyuta, Ananta Śeṣa, Vāsudeva and Lord Viṣṇu bestow auspiciousness upon us. May Nara-Nārāyaṇa, Padmanābha and Puruṣottama bestow auspiciousness upon us. May Viśvaksena, the Lord of the universe, Hr̥ṣīkeśa and Lord Hari bestow auspiciousness upon us. May Garuḍa and the son of Añjanā, who is the great devotee of Lord Rāma, Hanumān, bestow auspiciousness upon us. May the great and only Lord of auspiciousness, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is like a transcendental cloud full of eternity, knowledge and bliss and who is the Lord of all the demigods, bestow upon us all prosperity and auspiciousness." (Ṛg Veda, Kṛṣṇa Upaniṣad)

Remarks (RKDB) – Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura has accepted Sat-kriyā-sāra-dīpikā as the authorized *vaiṣṇava* manual for *saṁskāras*, just as he has accepted Hari-bhakti-vilāsa as the authorized scripture for *arcana*, and has recommended that all *vaiṣṇava gr̥hasthas* should follow its procedures. Herein, we should remember that the *saṁskāras* are part of the VAD (*varṇāśrama-dharma*) whereas, *arcana* is part of *sādhana-bhakti*. **Both VAD and *sādhana-bhakti* have to be maintained in the post-SBSST Gauḍīya line.** Therefore, Haribhaktivilāsa and Pāñcarātrika texts focus on *arcana*, whereas, S.K.S.D. focuses on the VAD.

Again, a doubt arises in regards to the possibility of the above explained admixture of the Vedic and Pāñcarātrika methods implemented in the pre-SBSST and esp. the post-SBSST Gauḍīya lineage. Herein, the prima facie view can state that only the *pāñcarātrika* method is to be followed by the devotees of ISKCON and not the Vedic method, because SP has indicated as such in his celebrated Purport to S.B. 1.12.13 as follows –

***tasya prīta-manā rājā viprair dhaumya-kṛpādibhiḥ /
jātakam kārayām āsa vācayitvā ca maṅgalam //***

SYNONYMS

tasya -- his; *prīta-manāḥ* -- satisfied; *rājā* -- King Yudhiṣṭhira; *vipraiḥ* -- by the learned *brāhmaṇas*; *dhaumya* -- Dhaumya; *kṛpa* -- Kṛpa; *ādibhiḥ* -- and others also; *jātakam* -- one of the purificatory processes performed just after the birth of a child; *kārayām āsa* -- had them performed; *vācayitvā* -- by recitation; *ca* -- also; *maṅgalam* -- auspicious.

TRANSLATION

King Yudhiṣṭhira, who was very satisfied with the birth of Maharaja Parīkṣit, had the purificatory process of birth performed. Learned *brāhmaṇas*, headed by Dhaumya and Kṛpa, recited auspicious hymns.

PURPORT

There is a need for a good and intelligent class of *brāhmaṇas* who are expert in performing the purificatory processes prescribed in the system of *varṇāśrama-dharma*. Unless such purificatory processes are performed, there is no possibility of good population, **and in the age of Kali the population all over the world is of *śūdra* quality or lower for want of this purificatory process. It is not possible, however, to revive the Vedic process of purification in this age,** for want of proper facilities and good *brāhmaṇas*, but there is the *Pāñcarātrika* system also recommended for this age. **The *Pāñcarātrika* system acts on the *śūdra* class of men, supposedly the population of the Kali-yuga, and it is the prescribed purificatory process suitable to the age and time.** Such a purificatory process is allowed only for spiritual upliftment and not for any other purpose. Spiritual upliftment is never conditioned by higher or lower parentage.

After the *garbhādhāna* purificatory process, there are certain other *saṁskāras* like *simantonayana*, *sadhabhakṣaṇam*, etc., during the period of pregnancy, and when the child is born the first purificatory process is *jātakarman*. This was performed duly by Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira with the help of good and learned *brāhmaṇas* like Dhaumya, the royal priest, and Kṛpācārya, who was not only a priest but also a great general. Both these learned and perfect priests, assisted by other good *brāhmaṇas*, were employed by Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira to perform the ceremony. Therefore all the *saṁskāras*, purificatory processes, are not mere formalities or social functions only, but they are all for practical purposes and can be successfully performed by expert *brāhmaṇas* like Dhaumya and Kṛpa. Such *brāhmaṇas* are not only rare, but also not available in this age, **and therefore, for the purpose of spiritual upliftment in this**

fallen age, the Gosvāmīs prefer the purificatory processes under *Pāñcarātri*ka formulas to the Vedic rites.

>>> Ref. VedaBase => SB 1.12.13

Remarks (RKDB) – Since, all the *pāñcarātri*ka texts including the Nārada Pañcarātra (the supreme among all *pañcarātras* and *sātvika tantras*) only describe the processes of *pāñcarātri*ka-*vaiṣṇava-dīkṣā* consisting *pañca-saṁskāras* (i.e. five-fold purifying rites of *vaiṣṇava-dīkṣā*) and do not describe the *śoḍaśa-saṁskāras* (i.e. sixteen purifying rites of Vedic four *āśramas*), the sixteen Vedic rites have no connection with the *pāñcarātri*ka texts. The said sixteen rites are purely Vedic. *Upanayanam saṁskāra* is part of these sixteen rites. The purificatory processes i.e. *saṁskāras* to be undergone through the *pāñcarātri*ka formula as emphasized by SP in the above quoted purport to S.B. 1.12.13, is a reference made to the *pañca-saṁskāras* of the *pāñcarātri*ka-*vaiṣṇava-dīkṣā* and not to the Vedic 16 *saṁskāras*. However, SP’s purport can be considered to apparently cause perplexity in the minds of those who are unaware of the dualistic usage to the common term “*saṁskāra*”. As just explained, *saṁskāras* are two-fold i.e. Vedic and *Pāñcarātri*ka. The said purport of SP is describing two types of *saṁskāras*; hence, when SP prefers *Pāñcarātri*ka formula over the Vedic method, he is not talking about an alternate and is also not advocating the total rejection of the Vedic formula. How? *Pāñcarātri*ka *vaiṣṇava-saṁskāra* is not an alternate to the Vedic *upanayanam saṁskāra*. Had it been so, there would have been two types of all the sixteen *saṁskāras* (which found in the Vedic *grhya-sūtras*) i.e. there would be sixteen Vedic *saṁskāras* and the sixteen *pāñcarātri*ka *saṁskāras*. For every Vedic *saṁskāra*, there would be an alternate *pāñcarātri*ka *saṁskāra*. As for example, *anteṣṭī-saṁskāra* (the funeral ceremony for householders) is one of the 16 Vedic *saṁskāras*; but we don’t find any alternate to it in the *pāñcarātri*ka texts. So also, the *vivāha-saṁskāra* (i.e. marriage ceremony) is also a purely Vedic *saṁskāra* not alternatively mentioned in the *pāñcarātri*ka texts. Now, without the Vedic *vivāha* and *anteṣṭī saṁskāras*, even the ISKCON devotees’ lives cannot go through, since there are no *pāñcarātri*ka substitutes for these rites. Hence, all the sixteen **solely Vedic *saṁskāras*** including the *upanayanam* and *garbhādhāna*, are completely distinct from the five-fold *dīkṣā-saṁskāras* of the *pañcarātras*. The Vedic and *Pāñcarātri*ka *saṁskāras* are not mutual counterparts nor foes. Both have distinct usages. The *pāñcarātri*ka five-fold rites comprise the *vaiṣṇava-dīkṣā* and are especially meant for the spiritual upliftment that SP talks about in his purport to S.B. 1.12.13. Such a spiritual upliftment is merely not executed by the sixteen Vedic *saṁskāras* in Kali Yuga. Why? Because, only that person can undergo Vedic *saṁskāras* such as the *upanayanam saṁskāra* (sacred thread ceremony) who is classified in the upper three *varṇas*. Since, in Kali Yuga, everyone is born as a *śūdra* (i.e. “*janmanā jāyate śūdraḥ...*” etc.), one cannot undergo the Vedic *saṁskāras* like the *upanayanam saṁskāra* without first attaining the status of the upper three *varṇas*. The status of the upper three *varṇas* is attained through the reception of the *pāñcarātri*ka mantras like the *gopāla mantra* and the *kāma-gāyatrī*. This is corroborated in B.S. 5.27 as follows –

***atha veṇu-ninādasya trayī-mūrti-mayī gatiḥ /
sphurantī praviveśāsu mukhābjāni svayambhuvaḥ //***

***gāyatrīm gāyatas tasmād adhigatya sarojajaḥ /
saṁskṛtas cādi-guruṇā dvijatām agamat tataḥ //***

TRANSLATION

Then *Gāyatrī*, mother of the Vedas, being made manifest, i.e. imparted, by the divine sound of the flute of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, entered into the lotus mouth of Brahmā, born from himself, through his eight ear-holes.

The lotus-born Brahmā having received the *Gāyatrī*, sprung from the flute-song of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, attained the status of the twice-born, having been initiated by the supreme primal preceptor, Godhead Himself.

>>> Ref. VedaBase => B.S. 5.27

Remarks (RKDB) – In the purport to B.S. 5.27, SBSST explicitly mentions (originally Jīva Gosvāmī has revealed this fact in his commentary to B.S. 5.27) the *kāma-gāyatrī* as the type of *gāyatrī* given to Brahmā by the flute of Lord Govinda. Now, one aspect to be noted herein, is that generally, the *brahma-gāyatrī* is considered to be the mother of the Vedas. But, in this verse of B.S., the *kāma-gāyatrī* has been implied as the mother of the Vedas. Why? Because, *kāma-gāyatrī* is the *pāñcarātri*ka counter-part of the Vedic/*Purāṇic brahma-gāyatrī* mantra. Brahma Saṁhitā is part of the overall category of *vaiṣṇava tantras/pāñcarātras*. Since, Kāma gāyatrī is mentioned only in Brahma Saṁhitā which is a *pāñcarātri*ka text and not mentioned in *purāṇas* or Vedas, it is a purely *pāñcarātri*ka counter part of the *brahma-gāyatrī*. Through this *pāñcarātri*ka *kāma-gāyatrī*, the status of all Kaliyugī jīvas is transformed into that of the upper three *varṇas* (*dvijātva*). Once, having received the *dvijātva* (status of a twice-born), the Vedic *upanayanaṁ saṁskāra* or the sacred thread ceremony can be given. In the Gauḍīya Maṭhas, all the *pāñcarātri*ka mantras excluding the *brahma-gāyatrī* mantra are given first and then the *brahma-gāyatrī* mantra and sacred-thread ceremony following a Vedic sacrifice is executed. This is because, in Gauḍīya Maṭha, the Vedic *brahma-gāyatrī* is given. Therefore, it is given after the twice born status is achieved first through the *pāñcarātri*ka mantras. Since, Vedic *brahma-gāyatrī* is given in the Gauḍīya Maṭha, the women are not allowed to have it.

But, in ISKCON, first the *brahma-gāyatrī* is given and then all the other *pāñcarātri*ka mantras. Why? Because, in ISKCON, the *Purāṇic* form of *brahma-gāyatrī* is practiced [There is no apparent difference between the *purāṇic brahma-gāyatrī* and the Vedic *brahma-gāyatrī* but the only difference is that of the status and its eligibility; if the *brahma-gāyatrī* is given considering it to be Vedic, it cannot be given to women and it can be given to men only after the *pāñcarātri*ka *kāma gāyatrī* is allotted initially. But, if the *brahma-gāyatrī* is given considering it to be *purāṇic*, then it can be allotted prior to the bestowal of the *kāma-gāyatrī* and other *pāñcarātri*ka mantras; in such a case (as we see in ISKCON's tradition established by SP), the *purāṇic brahma-gāyatrī* can be allotted to women also.]. In any case (whether it be pertaining to the Gauḍīya Maṭha or ISKCON), the *upanayanaṁ saṁskāra* remains purely Vedic because, the core part of the *upanayanaṁ saṁskāra* is the bestowal of a *yajñopavīta* or a sacred thread. There is no mention of any alternate process for the sacred-thread ceremony in any *purāṇa* or *pāñcarātra*. Since, the Vedic *upanayanaṁ saṁskāra* has no alternative, it is not given to women (even in the liberal initiation tradition of ISKCON as established by SP) and it is allotted to men only after their (those men's) first attaining *dvijātva* (twice-born status) through the application of the *Purāṇic/Vedic brahma-gāyatrī* mantra and the *pāñcarātri*ka mantras.

Hence, when SP is talking about the superiority of *pāñcarātri*ka methods over the Vedic method, he is not indicating any alternative to the Vedic path. Rather, SP's intention is that first a person born as a *śūdra* in Kaliyuga (all humans born are *śūdras* in Kaliyuga) should undergo the *pāñcarātri*ka rites of purification and later on, he can go through the Vedic rites. SP's and the gosvāmīs' intention is not to reject the Vedic rites. Why? Had it been so, Śrīla Gopālabhaṭṭa Gosvāmi would not have mentioned his Satkriyāsāradīpikā as a Vedic manual for all householder *grhastha-vaiṣṇavas* (including those coming from the *antyaja* and *mleccha* backgrounds). Rather, G.B.G. explicitly refers to his manual as a Vedic manual (in S.K.S.D. Invocatory Section, Verses 2nd & 3rd). Evidence –

(i) “*vakti-gr̥hi-dvijādīnāmananyānām viśeṣataḥ / paddhatiṁ tām vivāhādeḥ sat-kriyā-sāra-dīpikām //*”

“*śrīmad-gopāla-bhaṭṭo ‘yaṁ sādḥūnāmājñayā bhṛsaṁ / bhagavad-dharma-rakṣārthaṁ bhaktānām vaidikī tu yā //*”

Rendition

“I am composing a ritualistic compendium by the name of Sat-kriyā-sāra-dīpikā which shall focus on the *sāṁskāras* like marriage ceremony etc. and which will be specifically intended for the usage of the exclusive devotees of twice born status situated in the house-hold life. By undertaking the decree of saintly *vaiṣṇavas*, this person known as Śrīmān Gopālabhaṭṭa is composing the Vedic manual for the protection of the spiritual life of the devotees of the Lord.”

For the said reasons, when SP refers to the need of qualified *brāhmaṇas* in Kaliyuga in the purport to S.B. 1.12.13, his intention is that the aspirants should become qualified *brāhmaṇas* by initially undergoing the *pāñcaratika* process of *pañca-saṁskāras* (i.e. vaiṣṇava-dīkṣā) and later on through the Vedic *saṁskāras*, they can become fully qualified to perform Vedic rites such as the *garbhādhāna saṁskāra* (the pre-impregnation ceremony for children), *nāmakaraṇa-saṁskāra* (the name giving ceremony for children) and all the 16 Vedic *saṁskāras*.

Any alternative to the 16 Vedic *saṁskāras* is not possible through *pāñcaratras*, as it will be shown in the below quoted essay of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura. In that essay, BVT is not mentioning about any of the 16 Vedic rites among the *pāñcaratrika* rites.

Pañca-saṁskāra

The Process of Initiation

The following discourse is a translation of an article written in Bengālī, entitled *Pañca-saṁskāra*, by Kedārnatha Datta Bhaktivinoda. The article was originally published in the journal, *Sajjana Tosani*, (vol. 2/1) in 1885. We have added portions, indicated by square brackets, from a supplementary article of the same title also from *Sajjana Tosani* (vol. 4/1) published in 1892. Translated by RKDB.

“It is said in the *śāstra* that a person who receives *pañca-saṁskāra* can practice two kinds of devotion [1] and gain permanent happiness in the eternal abode of Śrī Hari:

***avāpta-pañca-saṁskāro labdha-dvi-vidha-bhaktikaḥ /
sākṣāt kṛtya hariṁ tasya dhāmnī nityam pramodate //*[2]**

Persons who read this instruction with faith will want to understand the meaning of the expression *pañca-saṁskāra*. In order to help them, we will first explain the conventional understanding of the term and then give its deeper significance.

The *smṛti-śāstras* explain *pañca-saṁskāra* in the following manner:

***tāpaḥ puṇḍraṁ tathā nāma mantro yāgas ca pañcamah /
amī hi pañca-saṁskārāḥ paramaikānti-hetavaḥ //***

"*Tāpa, puṇḍra, nāma, mantra, and yāga* – these five items comprise *pañca-saṁskāra*. They are the cause of intense devotion to Lord Hari." [3]

When a faithful person learns about *pañca-saṁskāra*, he approaches a religious teacher and humbly requests him for initiation, or *dīkṣā*. After considering the student's sincerity, the teacher mercifully gives *tāpa* and *puṇḍra* to the student in order to sanctify his body. Some religious groups give *tāpa* by marking the student's body in various places with the symbols of Śrī Viṣṇu's conch, disc, club and lotus using hot iron brands. Other religious groups imprint the name of Hari with clay using a sandalwood stamp. [In reference to *tāpa* the *smṛti śāstras* further state:

***hari-namākṣarair gātram aṅkayet candanādinā /
sa loka-pāvano bhūtvā tasya lokam avāpnuyāt // [4]***

"One who marks his body with the syllables of Hari's name using sandal paste purifies the world and after death attains the kingdom of God."

[In the Śrī Sampradāya of Rāmānuja, *tāpa* is given by branding the body with the symbols of conch and disc, but Śrī Caitanyadeva has instructed that we mark the body with Harināma using sandal paste etc. instead of brands. This rule is a blessing for the souls of *kalī-yuga*.]

Puṇḍra, or *tilaka* marks, are vertical lines drawn on the body. The *śāstras* interpret these vertical marks either as symbols representing the Temple of Hari, or as His footprints. Accordingly each religious group has its own prescription for *puṇḍra* which is universally accepted within that particular group. [5]
Nāma or name is the third *saṁskāra*. Mercifully the teacher utters the name of Hari into the ear of the faithful student. This name is to be recited daily by the student. [Receiving name means that one understands one's self to be a servant of Hari. During initiation the teacher also gives a personal name to the student which indicates devotion to Hari. In the Śrī Sampradāya of Rāmānuja, names like Rāma Kṛṣṇa Dāsa, Nārāyaṇa Dāsa, Rāmānuja Dāsa, etc. are given. In the Gauḍīya Sampradāya, names such as Śrī Govinda Dāsa, Śrī Nityānanda Dāsa, Śrī Caitanya Dāsa, etc. are used. Since the time of Śrīman Mahāprabhu names like Ratnabāhu, Kavikarṇapūra, Premanidhi, etc. have been used. Subsequently, even names such as Bhāgavatabhūṣaṇa, Gītābhīuṣaṇa, Bhaktibhūṣaṇa, etc. are employed.]

The fourth *saṁskāra* is *mantra*. Out of his mercy the teacher gives an 18 syllable *mantra* to his beloved student. [*Mantra* is the recitation of a short prayer which corresponds to the particular deity one worships. In the worship of Kṛṣṇa an 18 syllable *mantra* is given.]

The fifth and final *saṁskāra* is *yāga* or deity worship. Using the *mantra* which he has received from his teacher, the student begins the worship of *sālagrāma śilā* or *śrī mūrti*, the Deity of Viṣṇu. This is known as *yāga*. By receiving *pañca-saṁskāra*, the five sacraments, a faithful person enters into *bhajana-kriyā* or the personal worship of God, which eventually leads to pure love for Śrī Hari.

When we analyze the stages that lead to love of God, we understand that faith or *śraddhā* is the first stage. Without *śraddhā*, there is no way to obtain love of God. From faith, one seeks saintly association, called *sādhū-saṅga*. This leads to shelter at the feet of a spiritual teacher. Thereafter, *pañca-saṁskāra* or initiation follows. *Pañca-saṁskāra* gives rise to *bhajana-kriyā* or the personal worship of God. *Bhajana-kriyā* leads to *anartha-nivṛtti*, which is the stage where one clears up unwanted things from his heart. After *anartha-nivṛtti* one's faith can develop and one enters the stage called *niṣṭhā* or

mature faith. From *niṣṭhā*, taste or *ruci* develops. This leads to the stage called *āśakti* or deep attachment. From *āśakti* spiritual emotions called *bhāva* spring forth. This eventually ripens into the stage called love of God, *prema*. Therefore, everyone should seek shelter at the feet of a spiritual teacher and receive *pañca-saṁskāra*, which is the source of *bhajana*. Without *pañca-saṁskāra*, *bhajana* is not spontaneous. Instead, it is performed with difficulty.

Some people think that *prema* or love of God can be obtained without *pañca-saṁskāra*. This is incorrect. The conditioned soul in this world has become hostile to the Divine, and consequently his original spiritual nature has become distorted. As a result he must sanctify himself before his true spiritual nature can develop. And what is the means to attain this pure state? The best way is through *saṁskāra* or sanctification. Without *saṁskāra* how can his distorted nature be given up? If we see someone whose nature is not distorted then we think that in a previous birth, through the mercy of a spiritual teacher, he must have received *saṁskāra*, and on the strength of that *saṁskāra* he has attained his true spiritual nature wherein *prema* or love of God has arisen. Otherwise we think that this person has been imperceptibly sanctified by the inconceivable mercy of the Lord Himself. No matter how you look at it, *saṁskāra* is always there. On the other hand, *saṁskāra* is not necessary for liberated persons because their nature is not distorted. Distortion of the soul's original spiritual nature is the cause of his bondage in this world. For this reason, without *saṁskāra* the life of the conditioned soul is impure. Even if a person has attained *prema* on account of previous *saṁskāra*, still in his present life he again receives *saṁskāra* in order to set a proper example for the good of all.

Saṁskāra exists in all religions and in all countries. The purer a particular religion is, the more its *saṁskāras* are sacred and complete. Although we have not had the opportunity to thoroughly study the *saṁskāras* of all religions, we at least can say that the *saṁskāras* of the Āryan religion appear to be of a higher order than the *saṁskāras* of other religions. In particular, the *saṁskāras* of Vaiṣṇava culture are the best part of the Āryan religion. No other practise is as sacred and complete.

The question arises, "if the practise of *saṁskāra* found in *Vaiṣṇava* culture is so good, then why are those who practise it still bound by distorted natures?" The answer is that Vaiṣṇava *saṁskāra* is the best, but at the present time [6] it is practised in name only. Both the spiritual teacher and the student block their own spiritual advancement by being content with only the external aspects of *saṁskāra*, as I've just described. Today, the deeper significance of *saṁskāra* is not understood. When the student submits himself to the teacher, the teacher gives *pañca-saṁskāra* and then abandons him. What good can come from *pañca-saṁskāra* of this type? Externally the student looks good, but internally there is nothing. The symbols of divine conch, disc and the name of Hari mark the body. The tongue utters the name of Hari and worship of *sālagrāma śilā* or *śrī-mūrti* with *mantra* is performed, but the student is addicted to endless sinful practises. At night, he takes intoxicants and practises debauchery! Oh good teacher, how have you benefited your student? What is the difference in him before and after *dīkṣā*? In fact, he is worse. He is a hypocrite. There is no remorse, "I am sinful. It is my fault. How can my sin be given up?" These days no one thinks like this when they take shelter of a spiritual teacher. Sinful activities are performed without the slightest concern. What misfortune!

Why is this? The reason is that the wrong kind of relationship exists between teacher and student. The *śāstras* give rules to guide this relationship, but they are not followed. The student who is burning in the fire of material life, who analyses his predicament and concludes, "My relationship with material nature is not permanent, therefore I must take shelter of a spiritual teacher in order to obtain the feet of God," has reached the stage of faith and is qualified to take shelter of a spiritual teacher. The teacher should study the student for one year and observe his atonement. This is called *tāpa*. During this

examination period the student is encouraged to atone even more and when the teacher is satisfied, he brands the student with the symbols of conch and disc. These marks are permanent and they symbolize the purity that the student must maintain for the rest of his life. This is *tāpa*, the faithful soul's first *saṁskāra*. In English we define the word *tāpa* as "repentance, atonement, and the permanent impression of higher sentiment on the soul." *Tāpa* applies not only to the body, but also to the mind and the soul. If it is only physical, in the form of branding or stamping, then *tāpa* has not actually taken place and religious practise becomes hypocritical. At the present time this kind of hypocrisy has weakened Vaiṣṇava culture. Without *tāpa* or inner repentance, the soul cannot live as a Vaiṣṇava. Without *tāpa* the whole process becomes useless. Without *tāpa* the heart remains impure. Therefore good friends, seek atonement without delay!

When the teacher sees that the student has received *tāpa* properly, (in other words, genuine atonement has occurred) then out of his mercy, the teacher gives him *ūrdhva-puṇḍra*. What is *ūrdhva-puṇḍra*? It is effulgence! It is also known as *ūrdhva-gati*, the path of advancement. After receiving *tāpa* the student voluntarily accepts a suitable amount of renunciation from worldly activities. This is the path of advancement. However, if the student accepts no renunciation then his *tāpa* or atonement, is useless. So much trouble! So much asceticism! So much renunciation of one's happiness! So much work to control lust, anger and greed, but it is all useless labor if one does not perform these austerities in order to obtain Vaiṣṇava, the kingdom of God. In other words, by taking shelter of Saccidānanda Lord Hari, a soul follows the path of advancement, *ūrdhva-gati*. The illumination of the soul, the mind and the body is called *ūrdhva-puṇḍra*. Aversion to material life and attachment to the Supreme Lord is called *tāpa*, and *puṇḍra* and these two ornaments are absolutely necessary for the conditioned soul. Without *ūrdhva-puṇḍra* the body is as good as dead. Realizing this we must bathe in atonement. Without *ūrdhva-puṇḍra* the mind drifts and becomes attached to lowly sense objects and then wastes its time discussing the lowest subjects. O repentant soul! Do not delay, mark the body, mind and soul with *ūrdhva-puṇḍra* and follow the path of advancement which leads to the kingdom of God. Without *ūrdhva-puṇḍra* the soul's real nature is extinguished. Therefore adopt *ūrdhva-puṇḍra*.

Seeing the beloved student shining with *tāpa* and *ūrdhva-puṇḍra*, the teacher gladly gives *nāma*, the holy name of God that awakens the soul's eternal nature. The eternal nature of the soul is servitude to the Lord, and by tasting the nectar of the Lord's holy name the soul is carried to the supreme abode. Then he says, "I am Hari Dāsa. I am not the enjoyer of this world. Even Maya herself is eternally connected to Kṛṣṇa and I must utilize her in the service of Kṛṣṇa." The eternal soul is then enchanted by singing the name of Hari. By taking shelter in the nectar of the Lord's holy name, the soul becomes aware of his own spiritual nature. Intelligent men, always sing the name of Hari! Let the mind always remember the name of Hari. May the soul always be adorned with the name of Hari.

Out of affection, the teacher next gives a *mantra* that allows his student to easily experience the nectar of the Lord's holy name. A *mantra* is a kind of prayer that contains the name of God that is inflected grammatically in the dative case. [7] The *mantra* also includes certain adjectives that qualify the name of God and allows it to express a particular mood or taste. By giving a *mantra* the teacher helps his student taste the holy name by selecting a suitable "flavour" for him. When we say "*namaḥ*", obeisance to Hari, we employ the 4th or the dative case ending. The dative case expresses the proper relationship between the worshipper, the worshiped and the worship that allows the taste of the holy name to be easily experienced. There is no end to the happiness of a person who has received a mantra. Those who analyze the meaning of the 18 syllable *mantra*, generally used in the worship of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, know that it is a condensed sampling of the taste available from the Lord. [8] The same also applies to the 24 syllable *gāyatrī* and other *mantras* that are often used to worship the Lord. [9] Those who have not

received a *mantra* can only speculate about the taste of the holy name, but unfortunately most of their considerations are useless. Therefore you must receive a *mantra*. Those who have received it consider it to be a most important *saṁskāra*. There are those who are aware of these principles and yet still are not on solid ground in the matter of worship because they have not received *tāpa*, *puṇḍra*, *nāma*, and *mantra* from a qualified teacher. Every subject has its rules and regulations and those who reject the rules and regulations of worship often experience difficulty. Therefore it is said:

***śruti-smṛti-purāṇādi-pañcarātra-vidhiṁ vinā /
ātyantikī harer bhaktir utpātāyaiva kalpate //***

"Devotional service of the Lord that ignores the authorized Vedic literatures like the *Upaniṣads*, *Purāṇas* and Nārada-pañcarātra is simply an unnecessary disturbance in society." [10]

Therefore my friends! With logic and pure reasoning receive *tāpa*, *puṇḍra*, *nāma* and *mantra* from a qualified teacher. Not only will you become happy, but by establishing this divine link with God you will benefit all the people around you.

Out of love the teacher next explains the procedure of *yāga* or Deity worship to his student. Without Deity worship the conditioned soul cannot advance properly. Even though one has received *tāpa*, *puṇḍra*, *nāma*, and *mantra* the soul's material condition has not fully abated. Only when one has pleased Lord Hari is the soul freed from this material world at the time of death. Therefore, until the end of life, *yāga* is necessary even for those who have received mantra. Even though one lives in this world without attachment to matter, still there is danger from matter. Therefore, *yāga*, or the path of Deity worship, is the proper way to deal with matter. *Yāga* is the procedure of worshipping the Lord by employing all the physical and mental faculties of seeing, touching, smelling, tasting, thinking, discriminating and acting. Utilizing each of these faculties in the worship of *śālagrama*, for example, is a good way to cultivate love of God. Service to *Śrī Vighraha*, the Deity, is called Vaiṣṇava *yāga*. No matter what our situation, we must live in this world by working. Therefore, a person who has received mantra has the duty to spend his life worshipping God with devotion following the rules of Deity worship. By teaching *yāga* the compassionate teacher rescues his student from the ocean of material existence. *Yāga* is the fifth and final *saṁskāra*. A person without *yāga* has no life and he is forced to accept the results of his karma. Therefore, one should live in this world as a Vaiṣṇava and engage in Deity worship. A detailed explanation of the principles of Deity worship is offered in the book *Śrī Caitanya-śikṣāmṛta* in the discussion under *vaidhī-bhakti*. [11]

I have now explained both the conventional understanding and the inner significance of the expression *pañca-saṁskāra*. But still one question arises. "Why do teachers not give this kind of instruction to their students today?" The answer is that due to the degenerative effects of time, man's understanding about the role of the spiritual teacher has become extremely corrupt. Today people take instruction from *kula-gurus*, hereditary family teachers or similar such persons, and therefore they are unable to take shelter of a qualified teacher. It is said in the *sāstras* that the seriously inquisitive student must approach a spiritual teacher who has attained shelter and faith in the Vedas and God, and surrender to him.

***tasmād gurum prapadyeta jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam/
śābde pare ca niṣṇataṁ brahmaṇy upaśamāśrayam //*** [12]

When one surrenders in this way, the material ocean diminishes to the size of a calf's hoofprint. However, if that surrender is in name only, then it is pointless. At the present time most people do not want the shelter of a genuine teacher because very few want to solve the problems of life. However, it is the responsibility of the living soul in this world to search for a teacher and solve these problems. The Lord reveals Himself to the serious student as a teacher to rescue him. It is good to have a strong desire for a teacher, but it is wrong to accept just any person simply to satisfy one's desire. A genuine teacher will come to one who is sincerely searching, but before the student accepts the teacher he should also examine him for one year. Without examination the teacher-student relationship is only a disturbance. After close study we conclude that without proper acceptance of *pañca-saṁskāra* the conditioned soul cannot develop intense devotion to Sri Hari. Therefore *pañca-saṁskāra* is extremely necessary.

[1]. Devotion is of two kinds, namely *vaidhī-sādhana-bhakti*, devotional service performed according to rules and regulations and *rāgānugā-sādhana-bhakti*, devotional service performed by following the moods of Kṛṣṇa's Vṛndāvana associates.

[2]. *Prameya Ratnāvalī* (by Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa) 8/5.

[3]. *Prameya Ratnāvalī* 8/6.

[4]. *Prameya Ratnāvalī* 8/6.

[5]. For more information about *tilaka* see A. W. Entwistle's work, *Vaiṣṇava Tilakas*, published in the International Association of the Vṛndavana Research Institute's bulletin, number 11 and 12 1981-2.

[6]. The late 19th century, Bengal.

[7]. Such as Kṛṣṇaya or Rāmāya.

[8]. The 18 syllable Gopāla mantra is one example.

[9]. The *kāma-gāyatrī*, used by Gauḍīyas, is one example.

[10]. *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1/2/101.

[11]. The original text of this article used the future tense, indicating that the book *Śrī Caitanya-śikṣāmṛta* had not yet been published (by BVT).

[12]. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11/3/21

Remarks (RKDB) – The sixteen Vedic *saṁskāras* are 1) Garbhādhāna Saṁskāra (pre-impregnation ceremony of purification), 2) Puṁsavana Saṁskāra (ceremony for producing a male child), 3) Simantonayanam Saṁskāra (ceremony for parting the hair), 4) Śoṣyaṅti-homa Saṁskāra (ceremony for the safe delivery of a child), 5) Jāta-karma Saṁskāra (the ceremony of birth), 6) Niṣkrāmaṇa Saṁskāra (the ceremony of first outing), 7) Nāma-karaṇa Saṁskāra (the ceremony of giving a name to the child), 8) Pauṣṭika-karma Saṁskāra (the ceremony of nourishment), 9) Anna-prāśanam Saṁskāra (the ceremony of feeding the grains), 10) Karṇa-vedha Saṁskāra (the ceremony of piercing the ears), 11) Cūḍā-karaṇam Saṁskāra (the ceremony of first hair cutting), 12) Vidyārambha Saṁskāra (the ceremony of entering the school), 13) Upanayanam Saṁskāra (the ceremony of the bestowal of a sacred-thread and allotment of *brahma-gāyatrī*; we have to remember that women don't go through full *upanayanam saṁskāra* and are given only *purāṇic brahma-gāyatrī*), 14) Samāvartanam Saṁskāra (the ceremony of graduation), 15) Vivāha Saṁskāra (the ceremony of marriage), 16) Anteyṣṭi Saṁskāra (the funeral ceremony). There is also a seventeenth *saṁskāra* known as the Sannyāsa Saṁskāra (the ceremony for entering the renounced order of life). All these have been mentioned in Satrkriyāsāradīpikā and Saṁskāradīpikā by GBG.

An objection taken by antagonists: How can it be considered that the *upanayanam saṁskāra* (esp. the allotment of a sacred thread or *yajñopavīta*) performed within ISKCON and Gauḍīya Maṭhas during the time of a second initiation is a Vedic *upanayanam saṁskāra*, especially when a breach of conduct as

decreed by the quotes of Manu Smṛti, Āśvalāyana Grhya Sūtra and Satkriyāsāradīpikā is seen by the said institutions during the bestowal of the said saṁskāra? Evidences –

(i) **garbhāṣṭāme ‘bde kurvīta brāhmaṇasyopanāyanam / garbhādekādaśe rājño garbhātu dvādaśe viśaḥ //**

brahma-varcasa-kāmasya kāryam viprasya pañcame / rājño balārthinah śaṣṭhe vaiśyasyehārthino ‘aṣṭame //

āśoḍaśād brāhmaṇasya sāvitrī-nātivartate / ādvāvimśāt-kṣatrabandhorācaturvimśaterviśaḥ //

ata ūrdhvaṁ trayo ‘pyete yathā-kālamasaṁskṛtāḥ / sāvitrī-patitā-vrātyā bhavantyārya-vigarhitāḥ //

naiterapūtairvidhivadāpadyapi hi karhicit / brahmānyaunañśca sambhandhānācared brāhmaṇaḥ saha //

Rendition

"In the eighth year after conception*", one should perform the initiation (*upanayana*) of a *Brāhmaṇa*, in the eleventh after conception (that) of a *Kṣatriya*, but in the twelfth that of a *Vaiśya*. (The initiation) of a *Brāhmaṇa* who desires proficiency in sacred learning should take place in the fifth (year after conception), (that) of a *Kṣatriya* who wishes to become powerful in the sixth, (and that) of a *Vaiśya* who longs for (success in his) business in the eighth. The (time for the) *Sāvitrī* (initiation) of a *Brāhmaṇa* does not pass until the completion of the sixteenth year (after conception), of a *Kṣatriya* until the completion of the twenty-second, and of a *Vaiśya* until the completion of the twenty-fourth. After those (periods men of) these three (castes) who have not received the sacrament at the proper time, become *Vratyas* (outcasts), excluded from the *Sāvitrī* (initiation) and despised by the Āryans. With such men, if they have not been purified according to the rule, let no *Brāhmaṇa* ever, even in times of distress, form a connexion either through the Veda or by marriage." Taken from Manu 2.36-40.

(ii) **“aṣṭame varṣe brāhmaṇamupanayed garbhāṣṭame vaikādaśe kṣatriyaṁ dvādaśe vaiśyam.”** - Taken from Āśvalāyana-grhya Sūtra 1.20

Rendition

“In the eighth year i.e. in the eighth year after conception, a *brāhmaṇa* should be initiated (into the *upanayanam*) In the eleventh year, a *kṣatriya* and in the twelfth year, a *vaiśya* should undergo (the *upanayanam*).” – A.G.S. 1.20

Remarks (of antagonists) – This rule is also referred by Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī in Sat-kriyā-sāra-dīpikā on page 119 of the PDF version regarding *upanayanam saṁskāra*. (*Eighth year after conception works out to be 7th year after birth.)

(iii) **“garbhāṣṭame aṣṭame vā ‘bde brāhmaṇasyopanayaṁ kartavyam. tatra tadasambhave ṣoḍaśa-varṣa-paryyantamupanayanādhikārah ataḥ-param sāvitrī-patito brāhmaṇo nopanetavya iti.”** – S.K.S.D.

Rendition

“From the eighth of the conception or in the eighth year after birth, a *brāhmaṇa*’s *upanayanam* is to be executed. If that is not possible, the eligibility to undergo *upanayanam* continues up till the age of

sixteenth. After that period, a *brāhmaṇa* who has fallen down from the status of acquiring *brahma-gāyatrī* should not be given *upanayanam*.” – S.K.S.D.

Clarification on the said objection of antagonists – So did SBSST violate the *dharma-śāstra* by giving *upanayanam* to fully grown men all of whom were well past the age of 15 years after birth mentioned in Manu, Satkriyāsāradīpikā and other places? No he did not. Why? Because first he gave them *Pāñcarātrika dīkṣā* aka *Pañca Saṁskāra*, that is, they were initiated as *Vaiṣṇavas*. This in itself is considered a second birth. So since they were now newly born they were well within the time limits to get *upanayanam saṁskāra* which was then duly awarded to them according to *Vaidika* system. They in fact (much specifically speaking) became *tri-jas*, the thrice born.

We have to remember that the purpose of *upanayanam* is to qualify the boy to become a *brahmacārī* and begin his study of the Veda. Without *upanayanam* one is not allowed to study the Veda. Hence it is done at a young age.

So Pañcarātra is only necessary to become a *brāhmaṇa* when you deal with *Vratyas*, persons who have past the cut off age mentioned by Manu and Satkriyāsāradīpikā etc. otherwise not.

One might argue that Pañcarātra would be necessary to make someone born in a non-*brāhmaṇa* family into a *brāhmaṇa*. But this again is not true because there are clear instances such as Jābāla Satyakāma, the son of a *śūdrāṇī*, who was given *upanayanam* by Gautama Muni simply on the virtue that he was governed by *satva-guṇa* the proof of which was his honesty in stating that his mother didn't know who his father was. He was of course within the time limits mentioned above.

So it would seem that Pañcarātra is only necessary to become a *brāhmaṇa* in the case of *Vratyas*. Otherwise not.

Hence, it is conclusively clear that SP's intention in the Purport to S.B. 1.12.13 is not to reject the sixteen Vedic rites but to emphasize the prior necessity of the *pāñcarātrika-vaiṣṇava-pañca-saṁskāra-dīkṣā* before undergoing the Vedic rites such as *Upanayanam* and also before acting as a priest for ceremonies such as *Garbhādhāna* etc.

As far as Rudra Yāmala Tantra is considered, it is found quoted in H.B.V. 2.28-30 as shown below –

(i) *rudra-yāmale*—

***sat-tīrthe'rka-vidhu-grāse tantu-dāmana-parvaṇoḥ |
mantra-dīkṣāṁ prakurvīta māsa-ṛkṣādi na śodhayet ||28||***

Dig-darśinī – “*tantu-parvaḥ śrāvaṇe pavitrāropanotsavaḥ | dāmana-parvaḥ caitre damanakāropanotsavas tayoh.*” ||28||

***sulagna-candra-tārādi-balam atra sadaiva hi |
labdho'tra mantor dīrghāyuh-sampat-santati-varadhanah ||29||***

Dig-darśinī – “*atra sat-tīrthādau.*” ||29||

sūrya-grahaṇa-kālena samāno nāsti kaścana |

***yatra yad yat kṛtaṁ sarvaṁ ananta-phaladaṁ bhavet |
na māsa-tithi-vārādi-śodhanaṁ sūrya-parvaṇi ||30||***

Dig-darśinī – “*sat-tīrthādiṣv api madhye sūrya-parvaṇaḥ prāśastyam darśayati sūryeti sārdhena.*” ||30||

Remarks (RKDB) – Translation of the above cited excerpt of H.B.V. is irrelevant to produce herein, as it talks about the astrological connection with the time of initiation. This excerpt is reproduced just to show that Rudra Yāmala Tantra has been quoted in H.B.V. But, this does not mean that the editions/versions of the Rudra Yāmala Tantra we have at present are also to be considered authorized. We shall show this elaborately in our analysis of the Conclusive Stand No. 24th. The Rudra Yāmala Tantra that is available at present is heavily (about 90%) interpolated and thus loses its genuine status. But, it is inferred that during the time of Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī and Śrīla Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, the said treatise was available in its original form. Similarly, the Kulārṇava Tantra 15.97 has been quoted by SG and GBG in H.B.V. 1.211 as follows:

**(i) *svapna-labdhe striyā datte mālā-mantre ca try-akṣare /
ekākṣare tathā mantre siddhādīn naiva śodhayet //***

“One should not test a *mantra* attained in a dream, a *mantra* given by a woman, a *mālā-mantra* [*mantra* over 20 syllables] or *mantras* of one or three syllables for *siddha* and so on.” [Note: This is in connection with a discussion on how to test the effect of *mantras* by various means. The author writes about *mantras* not needing testing, later stating that *kṛṣṇa-mantras* are exempt from testing.]

The members of the SAC 2005 have erroneously commented in their FDG paper submitted to GBC as follows: “This verse points to the fact that, in the past, women sometimes gave *mantras*. One could then assume that women, on occasion, had acted as *dīkṣā-gurus*.”

Remarks (RKDB) – But, the Kulārṇava Tantra that we have at present, is heavily interpolated with statements incompatible with *vaiṣṇava* philosophy and practise and thus not reliable as shown below:

The Kulārṇava-tantra is a ***Sākta*** text, not a *Vaiṣṇava* text, and thus supports many things that are incompatible with Vaiṣṇavism. For instance, one of the central tenets of the Kulārṇava-tantra is the method of worshipping Durgādevī with the *pañca-makāras*:

"The ingredients to be used in the worship of Devī are of many kinds. These comprise, in the Kaulācāra, *madya* (**wine**), *māṁsa* (**meat**), *matsya* (**fish**), *mudrā* (grain), *maithuna* ([**sex** with] woman)—well known as "the five *m's*" (*pañca-makāras*, each item beginning with *ma*)." (Avalon aka Sir John Woodroffe, Pandit, & Vidyāratna, 1965, p 47)

Since the Kulārṇava-tantra supports the ritualistic use of wine, meat, fish, and sex in worship, should we also adopt such practices? Should we also worship Devī instead of Kṛṣṇa? Not only is it dubious to use the Kulārṇava-tantra as evidence, but it is even dubious to assume that Kulārṇava-tantra supports the notion that women may be *dīkṣā-gurus*, for the Kulārṇava-tantra consistently describes *gurus* as male—for example, in such statements as:

"The initiated shall always please his guru, **guru's wife**, guru's son, [and] adherents of the Kaula path of *śakti*, in the measure of his means." (Avalon, Pandit, & Vidyaratna 1965, p 110)

What to speak of women becoming a *dīkṣā-guru*, on the very same page as the above it is stated that a woman cannot (even) be initiated without the permission of her male guardian:

"The competence of the widow for *dīkṣā* is subject to the consent of her son; of the daughter to that of her father, of the wife to that of her husband. **A woman has no right of her own for getting *dīkṣā*.**"

In conclusion, when we consider that the Kulārṇava-tantra is not a *Vaiṣṇava* text but a *Śākta* text (which promotes practices that *Vaiṣṇavas* consider abominable and *tāmasic*), that in the Kulārṇava-tantra the guru is always referred to as a male, and that a woman cannot even receive *dīkṣā* without the permission of a male guardian, we conclude that to quote the Kulārṇava-tantra in support of females being a *dīkṣā-guru* is **no evidence at all**.

Hence, it is concluded that the version of Kulārṇava Tantra available at present is heavily interpolated by the *śākta tāntrikas* which certainly was not the case during the manifest pastimes of the six *gosvāmīs*. Therefore, whatever *prāmāṇyas* our *gosvāmīs* have cited from books like Kulārṇava Tantra and Rudra Yāmala Tantra etc., are to be accepted as bona fide and rest all *ślokas* appearing in these books should not be validated and used as references in our *sampradāya*. It is not astonishing to find classical books of Vedic culture lost nowadays. Similarly, an astrological treatise by Marharṣi Bhṛgu has also been lost in oblivion and all the Bhṛgu-saṁhitās which are available in the market at present, are none but interpolated texts. Even the whole version of Jaimini's Mahābhārata has been lost at present. Only one of the 18 *parvas* (cantos) of Jaimini's M.B. is currently available and printed by Gītā Press, Gorakhpura. There were two versions of M.B. i.e. one by the Sage Vaiśampāyana (which is wholly available at present) and other by the Sage Jaimini (both are disciples of Vyāsadeva). It is the classical belief of the traditional scholars of Gauḍīya Sampradāya that Sanātana Gosvāmī had taken the fundamental story of Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta from one of the 18 *parvas* (cantos) of M.B. of Jaimini. Sanātana Gosvāmī had paraphrased the said content in his own style with numerous additions and formed Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta. So, it is evident that the specific canto of Jaimini's M.B. containing the source story of Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta is not to be found anywhere at present. Similarly, in the late 17th century, one *śākta tāntrika* scholar had composed a book known as "Devī-bhāgavata-purāṇa" and had publicized it under the name of Vyāsadeva, a great fraud which continues up to the date. Even Jīva Gosvāmī notes in his Tattva-sandarbhā, Anuccheda 28 that many classical books such as the 'Catur-veda Śikhā', 'unavailable portions of Garuḍa Purāṇa', 'Mahā-saṁhitā', 'Tantra Bhāgavata', and 'Brahma-Tarka' – all of which were available during the time of Śrīman Madhvācārya (14th century) have been lost during his (Jīva's) time i.e. the late 16th century (in a mere gap of 250 years or so). Evidence –

(i) Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa writes in his Sanskrit commentary on the said 28th Anuccheda of Tattva Sandarbha as follows –

"kānicid-vākyāni tu madadṛṣṭākarāṇyasmadācāryya-śrī-madhva-muni-dṛṣṭākarāṇyeva kvacin-mayā dhriyante ityāha – kvaciditi."

Rendition

"Some statements (which I or Jīva Gosvāmī shall quote in my *sandarbhās*) are not directly seen by me; but my (previous) *ācārya* Śrī Madhvamuni has seen them directly and such evidences will be cited by me. This idea has been expressed by the phrase starting with "kvacid....." etc. (in the original 28th Anuccheda)."

For the said reasons, it is to be concluded that the versions of Kulārṇava Tantra and the Rudra-yāmala Tantra must have been present in their original form during the time of six gosvāmīs (i.e. during the time of the compilation of H.B.V.), which are contemporarily found heavily interpolated. Hence, only the quotations as cited in H.B.V. from these currently interpolated books should be accepted as authentic and rest all statements as non-acceptable. As we shall see during the analysis of the Rudra Yāmala Tantra's citation produced by the contenders (in Conclusive Stand No. 24th), since, those verses of R.Y.T. 2.32 and 2.113 are not cited by Sanātana Gosvāmī in H.B.V. and because, the R.Y.T.'s present interpolated form and contents are totally contradictory to the fundamental *vaiṣṇava* practices, such verses allowing female *dīkṣā-guruship* are to be considered unauthentic. Furthermore, as we have analyzed during our analysis of Conclusive Stand No. 16th, H.B.V. 1.32-58 and H.B.V. 2.3 prove to be strong roadblocks against the notion of females' *dīkṣā-guruship* as proclaimed by the contenders' citation from R.Y.T. 2.32 and 2.113. Hence, the contenders' stand collapses without having any possibility of rejuvenation!

Thus ends the Conclusive Stand No. 23rd.

Prima Facie Contention No. 24th (BRD's & MAD's outlook) – Section 7.4 (Page 18th of their draft) –

THE *TANTRAS* ALLOW FEMALE GURUS

The *Rūdra-yāmala-tantra* (2.32) says in regard to female gurus:

***sādhvī caiva sadācārā guru-bhaktā jīteṇ dīyā
sarva-mantrārtha-sarvajñā sadhavā pūjane ratā
guru-yogyā bhaved eṣā vidhavāṁ parivarjayet***

A saintly and righteous lady who is dedicated to her guru, a knower of all the *mantras*, all knowledgeable and who is constantly engaged in worship of the Lord, is eligible to become guru, except for a *vidhavā*, a lady whose husband has passed away.

From this verse it seems that the preferred candidates for women gurus are those who are duly married. However, the same book says that even the *vidhavās* are allowed if the mantra is a transcendental mantra and not a material one:

siddha-mantro yadi bhavet grhṇīyād vidhavā-mukhāt (2.113)

If the mantra is a *siddha-mantra* or a transcendental *mantra*, it can be accepted from a *vidhavā*.

Conclusive Stand No. 24th (RKDB's Perspective) – We shall provide the chapter summary of the currently available duplicate and interpolated text known as Rudra Yāmala, from which it can be easily ascertained that the contemporary R.Y.T. is a text which cannot be accepted by *vaiṣṇavas* unless there is found some quotation of the original non-interpolated R.Y.T. text existing during the time of our six gosvāmīs. Since, the above cited verses of R.Y.T. are not to be seen anywhere in H.B.V., they are unauthentic and cannot be accepted by the true *gauḍīya vaiṣṇavas* for the due reasons –

The Rudra-yāmala is used as a source by many other *āgamas* (i.e. *tantras*) but the original appears to have been lost. Strictly speaking, a *Yāmala* is a different class of text, and supposed to pre-date the *tantras*. However, manuscripts of the *Yāmala* seem to be lost, except as quotations in later works.

This analysis of the contents is of a *tantra* given the same name, but almost certainly, from internal evidence, not the original text. Although its provenance is unknown, it nevertheless contains a great deal of interesting information and focuses in great detail on the identity of the goddess with Kuṇḍalinī. Published in a Sanskrit edition by the Vācasampati Press, Calcutta, this work is divided into 66 chapters (*paṭalas*) of different lengths and written in a simple manner. Here is a digest of its contents .

Chapter One

The text takes the form of Lord Śiva asking questions and answering, making this as a *nigama* rather than of *āgama* form. Another example of this style is found in the undoubtedly old Kula-cūḍāmaṇi Tantra. In his form as Bhairava, Śiva opens by saying he has heard many *tantras* including the Śrī-yāmala, the Viṣṇu-yāmala, the Śakti-yāmala and the Brahma-yāmala. Now he wants to hear of the Uttara Khaṇḍa (last section) of the Śrī-rudra-yāmala.

Bhairavī (the *tāmasika* form of Durgādevī) replies that she will tell him and proceeds to enumerate the topics. These include Kumārī Lalitādevī's (this Lalitādevī is another form of Durgā and the famous Lalitā-sahasra-nāma is dedicated to this Lalitādevī) sādhanā (worship); Khecharī, Yakṣiṇī and Kanyā sādhanās (i.e. worship of various semi-demonic feminine phantoms and spirits); the *vidyās* (i.e. *mantras* of Unmatta Bhairavī (i.e. the intoxicated Bhairavī) and Kālī as well as their *sādhanās* (i.e. modes of worship) and a host of other topics of interest to a devout Śākta such as the *muṇḍa-māla-sādhanā* or the worship of the Garland of Skulls, Guhyakālī, Kubjikā's sādhanā, Bhadrakālī, Śmaśānakālī (i.e. the most aggressive and *andha-tāmasic* form of Kālī found and worshipped on the funeral grounds). She starts with a description of the well-known three types of *sādhakas* (i.e. *tāntrika* practitioners of these *sādhanās*) viz., *divya* (divine), *vīra* (heroic) and *paśu* (beastlike).

Chapter 2

Opens with a description of the characteristics of *Kulācāra*. She describes *pūjā* to be done when rising, including internal *pūjā* related to the *cakras*. A *sādhaka* must meditate on the guru on his Śakti at the centre above the head. Other meditations follow related to the other familiar six *cakras* in the body. The guru should be regarded in the same light as one's father, one's mother. He (or she because a guru may be either in the *tāntrika* tradition) is the *devatā* and is the refuge. After this section, Bhairava asks about the rules relating to initiation (*dīkṣā*). He wants to know about various *cakras* employed at initiation time including *Kulākula*, *A-Ka-Da-Ma*, the *Rāśi* (12 constellations) *cakras*, the *Kūrma* (tortoise) *cakra* and others including *Deva*, *Rinidani* and *Tārā cakra*. Initiation is so important that this and the following three chapters are devoted to the subject.

Chapter 17

In verse 108th, the *tantra* begins a remarkable story. It speaks of Sage Vaśiṣṭha (the family priest of Lord Rāma and the son of Lord Brahmā), describing him as being engaged for a long period of time in pursuing *sādhanā*, restraining himself and practising austerities (*tāpasa*). Despite 1,000 years of this, he had not achieved his goal. He had a vision of Sarasvatī in which he was told to go to the land of Buddha (Buddha-deśa), to Mahācīna (i.e. present day China), a non-Vedic place, where he would achieve what he wanted.

Going to the region of the Brahmaputrā (Brahmaputrā originates in China and descends downwards towards the last north-eastern state of Aruṇācala Pradeśa in India), he discovered hosts of men and women apparently engaged in non-Vedic practises, swilling wine, eating flesh and engaging in sexual intercourse. All were naked, their eyes reddened with liquor. Yet all were enlightened. Going to Buddha, Vaśiṣṭha asked how this could be. Buddha is made to reply: "Vaśiṣṭha, listen! I will speak of the highest path of *Kula* by knowing which a man takes the form of Rudra immediately!" He then speaks of the practice of *Mahacīnācāra*. By this method, all the Vedic demigods became enlightened. More details of the *Mahacīnācāra* come in the Bṛhadnīla Tantra's 7th chapter as follows –

Bathing and so forth is done mentally, purifying celestial gaze is done mentally, so too is clothing and recitation of *mantra*. Resolution (*saṅkalpa*) and so forth and *pūjā* are also done mentally. All times are good, there is no time that is not good at all. There is no difference between day and night, nor of twilights and great nights. One should do everything mentally, including clothes, seat, place, temple, body, wine. One should never do purifying here and act mentally, free of distinctions. There is no need here for *puraścaraṇa* (prior actions), nor for considering faults of *mantras* and so forth. The *mantrin* (i.e. a possessor of a *mantra*) who meditates thus obtains the fruit of all that is desired. The *Mahacīnakrama*, it emerges, is sexual intercourse with an initiated *śakti*. (Ch. 7th, Verses 103rd to 107th)

Remarks (RKDB) – The chapter summaries of the currently available Rudra Yāmala Tantra speak for themselves and do not require any elaboration from our side. It is impossible that Sanātana Gosvāmī and Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī would have quoted from such a *tāmasika* and anti-Vedic *tantra*. Therefore, the citations of R.Y.T. as found in H.B.V. 2.28-30 certainly belong to the original text of purely pro-Vedic and *sāttvika* *tantra* known as Rudra Yāmala Tantra. But, such is not the case with the contenders' citation from the currently available interpolated and duplicate version of R.Y.T. 2.32 and 2.113. Hence, the contenders' citations and stand have to be utterly rejected without giving a second thought.

Appendix (Part II of the total draft)

- Authored by Rādhākṛṣṇadāsa Brahmācārī GKG (alias Mr. Ramkrishna R. Swami)

1) Analysis of the categorical evidence rooted in SP's teachings.

As the honourable members of the Śāstric Advisory Committee (SAC) have noted, the excerpt from S.B. 4.1.32 is the strongest pronouncement of Śrīla Prabhupāda's counteracting the possibility of female *dīkṣā-gurus*. However, the SAC's attempt to undermine this statement of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam as inconclusive by proclaiming to further examine the positive evidence in favour of female *dīkṣā-gurus* (FDGs), is a great blunder on the part of the SAC 2005.

Prelude

The hierarchical gradation of evidence is known as *pramāṇa-tattva-tāratamya*. According to this formal hierarchy, the par excellence of SP's statements as documented within his commentaries on the classical literatures like SB, BG, CC, NOD, NOI, NBS and so forth will be thoroughly established in an ultimate

sense and on firm grounds as against the relative supremacy of SP's assertions seen in comparatively inferior sources comprised by the informal conversations, private letters, and formal discourses. SP's filed proclamations in the legalized and semi-legalized documents shall also serve as the paramount substantiation of the same degree, but in a distinct criterion.

The criteria shall be divided two-fold, each encompassing the two distinctly categorized forms of paramount evidence, as shown above. Since, ISKCON is a formally systematized and governed organization, one of the criteria will deal with all the legal, official, and formal aspects of the administration. Equally, another criterion shall maintain its ties with the Kṛṣṇa-conscious philosophy and the related devotional practices. Both of these criteria shall be analytically contemplated upon, for the conclusive attainment of the ultimate, unbiased and all-inclusive final verdict on the said FDG issue.

The criterion propounding the administrative facets shall contain SP's legalized and semi-legalized assertions as the most hierarchically principal proofs. The criterion advocating the philosophical matters shall include all of SP's instructions expressed within the various categories of literal composition and oration.

Since our predecessor preceptors like Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmīpāda, have utilized the strategy of hierarchical differentiation between the various category of proofs i.e. *pramāṇas* in the matter of ascertaining the most excellent evidence as verified in his Tattva-Sandarabha and Sarva-Samvādinī, we shall also follow the same footsteps while exemplifying the celebrated dictums of B.R.S. (1.2.74): “*. . . sādhu-vartmānuvartanam*”, B.R.S. (1.2.100): “*. . . yenasantahpratisthire*” – (quoted from Skanda-Purāṇa), and also the pronouncement of M.B. (3.313.117): “*. . . mahājanoyenagataḥsapanthāḥ*”. In contemporary times, even H.H. Jayādvaita Svāmī, the senior and eminent scholarly disciple of SP, accepts this technique as follows:

1st class - Books; Legal documents and similar papers

2nd class - Lectures

3rd class - Letters

4th class - Conversations

(I) Within the evidential criterion explicating the administrative aspects of ISKCON, SP's sequentially last ordinance in the context of the procedure of initiation to be followed till and after his demise, as exemplified in the open letter addressed to all G.B.Cs and T.P.s on 9th of July, 1977, shall be considered as the final directive on the legal aspect of the said FDG issue.

(II) Within the substantial criterion elucidating the philosophical and theological perspective of ISKCON, SP's verdict noted within his Bhaktivedānta Corpus and especially literatures like S.B. and C.C. shall be treated as the foremost verification available. S.B.'s topmost placement has been substantiated in the following verse of Śrīnātha Cakravartī Thakkura found in his Caitanya-mata-maṇjuṣā commentary to S.B. 10.1.1.: “*ārādhyobhagavān. . . śrīmad-bhāgavatampramāṇamamalaṁ . . .*” and within Tattva-Sandarabha and Sarva-samvādinī of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī by the citation of the Garuḍa-Purāṇa verse: “*artho 'yam brahma sūtrāṇām . . .*”. Regarding the position of C.C., SP has affirmed in the Introduction to the Ādi-līlā as follows: “Actually, the Caitanya-caritamṛta is not intended for the novice, for it is the postgraduate study of spiritual knowledge. Ideally, one begins with the Bhagavad-gīta and advances

through Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam to the Caitanya-caritāmṛta. Although all these great scriptures are on the same absolute level, for the sake of comparative study the Caitanya-caritāmṛta is considered to be on the highest platform. Every verse in it is perfectly composed.” Hence, the superlative platform of C.C. is undeniable.

Factual Brief Analysis

Since a clear decree either advocating or nullifying the possibility of an FDG is not found in the celebrated verse of C.C. 2.8.128 or in the related purport (i.e. the said C.C. verse and purport do not connect themselves with any description on the female gender), the authority of S.B. remains unexcelled in this regard i.e. above all categories of compositional and aural testimony of SP. Therefore, the formally expressed faulty opinion of the SAC in promoting this verse and accompanying purport in support of the popular Hindu-feminist notion of *sadhaka-vaiṣṇavī-dīkṣā-gurus* (in other words, FDGs) is an illegitimate endeavour to curtail the pre-eminent rank of S.B.’s proof on this issue. The SAC’s position therefore stands thoroughly refuted after the due completion of the weighing process of hierarchical evidences. In other words, the SAC’s argument is in error because it violates the established principles of *pramāṇa-tattva-tāratamya*. As we shall see, this is but one of many such errors the SAC makes throughout its argument.

Since in this hierarchical method of approach all other forms of former or later evidence pertaining to the ‘philosophical criterion’ depicted by the SAC paper and used to disprove SP’s pronouncement in the purport of S.B. 4.12.32, have been totally defeated by the illustrious status of SB as whole. The prohibitive injunctions for the FDG notion stand irrefutable in all contexts without any option for inconsistency, because lower levels of proof automatically subside in confrontation with testimonies of paramount stature, just as the authority of the *tāmasika* and *rājasika* purāṇas’ validity must subside against the *sāttvika-purāṇas*, as verified in the Tattva-Sandarabha.

Note: All other pro-FDG statements existing within SP’s variously categorized sermons especially seen in the SAC paper, are not to be found within the highest level of substantiations viz., S.B. and C.C., but only within the lower levels of philosophical evidences as reckoned above.

2) Systematic way of approach for the comprehension of the FDG issue.

The complete and unambiguous understanding of Śrīla Prabhupāda can be had only by studying his overall teachings, and particularly, as he much emphasized, by reading his books. SP’s instructions recorded within his books need no adjustments, confirmation, and interpretation from the perceptive evidence(i.e. *pratyakṣa*) quoted by many of SP’s senior disciples who had much direct association of SP’s *vapu*. If SP’s written instructions in his translations and commentaries on classical works are sometimes seen interpreted according to the personal experiences of these SP disciples who have had received ample direct association of SP during his mortally manifest pastimes, then the autonomous nature of SP’s written instructions in his books becomes subservient to the observation and interpretation by his direct disciples, which will create total chaos because even SP’s direct disciples are seen in mutual discord on several issues. This is corroborated due to the below mentioned analysis:

The most imperatively erroneous ideology to be addressed herein, is the one which mistakenly promulgates the autonomous and self-sufficient nature of SP’s precepts (*guru-vāṇī*) as complementary to and dependant on the so-called ‘*vaiduṣa-pratakṣa*’ the sensually perceptive

testimony of SP's direct disciples. Factually deliberating, the practical experiences of SP's direct disciples should be counted as supplementary to SP's direct precepts found in his writings and not as complementary. And only when those realizations of SP's disciples are found in full harmony to SP's direct literary compositions especially books, should they be reckoned as complementary to SP's mood and instructions. Otherwise, the grave fault of marking SP's direct sermons as incomplete, dependant, and complementary will arise and thereby destroy self-sufficient autocratic status of SP's gospels.

If SP's precepts are labelled as complementary to the practical realizations of his direct pupils, then

- (i) those revelations of all SP disciples are mutually contrary as seen on numerous occasions;
- (ii) not all revelations of his disciples are available in a recorded form and many of his direct disciples have attained demise;
- (iii) if there are present many disciples who are fostering valuable revelations in the core of their hearts, their comprehensions are subject to possible flaws on the basis of the uncertainty of their existence on the *bhāva-bhakti* level and hence cannot be appropriately designated as '*vaiduṣa-pratyakṣa*'.

Consequently, such a dependant exposition of SP's direct teachings would also become subject to the same triple flawed limiting adjuncts as enumerated above. And as a secondary outcome, SP's direct tuitions would not be fully grasped without the accompaniment of his direct disciples' revelations. Since those full revelations will not be available to all in the future generation of devotees to come, they (i.e. future generation of devotees) will be left wholly bereft of self-realization.

If the same fallacious argument is applied to the medieval literature of the six *gosvāmīs* of Vṛndāvana, then even the full import of that cannot be apprehended by us i.e. in the contemporary age, because not all the direct revelations of the contemporary associates of the six *gosvāmīs* are obtainable to us. What to speak of that, even the names of all the direct disciples and associates of the six *gosvāmīs* are not accessible to us. Therefore, pursuing the said mistaken doctrine proclaiming the deficient and complementary nature of SP's direct instructions, would in the end produce no beneficial everlasting consequence. Hence, we are impelled to admit the absolutely sovereign stature of SP's legacy.

For the same reason, any of SP's direct disciples who advance a pro-FDG doctrine based on his, or her, sensual perception of SP's dealings during his manifest pastimes, and subordinating SP's directly written and spoken affirmations to be alignment to his, or her, '*vaiduṣa-pratyakṣa*', shall constitute a fundamentally momentous, unforgivable blunder in approach.

Also, the eye-witness testimony of certain SP's disciples cannot be given preferential recognition either excelling or equalling to the actual hierarchically evaluated conclusion derived from the multifariously categorised sermons of SP. In other words, the testimony of SP's direct apostles can only be accepted as supplementary to the recorded sermons of SP; they are not complementary to SP's direct instructions, they can only be supplementary. Hence, only compatible and congruent testimony of SP's direct disciples can be acknowledged to favour the precise interpretation of SP's teachings and legacy. Otherwise, one should utterly abandon the testimony of SP's eye-witnesses when it is incompatible with the conclusive interpretation of SP's gospels, as also proven during the analysis of the above conversation. It can't be permitted to supersede the paramount rank of SP's directly issued precepts (*guru-vāñī*). Imperfections in the character of SP's direct disciples, or absence of an equivalent, perfected position to that of SP, are also grounds for disqualifying their testimony.

Since SP's directly composed instructions found within the celebrated Bhaktivedānta Purports to S.B. 4.12.32 are considered the highest, hierarchically based evidence superseding SP's precepts found in evidences of inferior category (informal conversations, lectures and private letters etc., but excluding formal documents and ordinances given through official letters addressed to TPs and GBCs, as per the schema of *pramāṇa-tattva-tāratamya*), SP's instructions in this purport strictly, uncompromisingly, and specifically prohibit the allowance of FDGs within ISKCON. Thus we find that some of SP's most senior disciples' faulty interpretation of SP's desires (based on the strength of their direct association of SP's *vapu*) in connection to the FDG issue is exposed as fallacious.

Note: It is interesting to consider the fact that all other instructions superficially supporting FDG ideology are not found within such first-class evidence as Purports to S.B. or any other classical literature commented upon by SP. Hence, those pro-FDG instructions are weakened during confrontation with S.B. 4.12.32's purport.

Another evidence can be cited to substantiate our point presented above. The hierarchically superlative rank of the July 9th, 1977 directive letter of SP, addressed to all T.P.s and G.B.C.s. The said ordinance letter is the last officially given direction by SP in regards to the future method of initiation to be followed by the coming generations in ISKCON.

Though the contemporary exponents of the deviated PSPT ideology (misnamed as the current so-called *ṛtviks* as represented by the IRM and other related groups) have a different interpretation to that of the ISKCON G.B.C.'s Z.A.S. and M.A.S.S. ideologies, nonetheless the common ground (i.e. that which both the parties viz., IRM and ISKCON G.B.C. accept on a general basis) affirming the proxy nature of the said eleven apostles of SP at least till the duration of SP's mortal demise has to be accepted. Since the currently existing G.B.C. law accepts the proxy nature of the said eleven apostles of SP at least till SP's demise, a very brief analysis on the July 9th letter through the lens of *pramāṇa-tattva-tāratamya* will commence henceforward. By analogy this will help clarify our application of the same tenets to the FDG issue.

As legitimately illustrated in the very ordinance letter, SP himself had given the list of eleven disciples who would act in that capacity. Since the said ordinance is the last directive in the matter of the initiation process to be continued in ISKCON even after the physical demise of SP, the enumeration of the eleven disciples has been done by SP under a sound mind and with a long term vision in focus. Therefore, SP even mentions the nomenclatures of two house-holder apostles who would be working in that direction, keeping in mind that future *dīkṣā-gurus* in ISKCON should include the *grhastha-ācāryas* as well. **If SP truly, practically, and ultimately had a desire of including some of his selected senior female disciples like Mothers Mālatīdāsī, Govindadāsī, Jādurānīdāsī, and Jamunādāsī etc., then he would have certainly mentioned them. If SP didn't deem proper even the appointment of female disciples to work in that capacity (as a mere proxy till his demise), how can the future implementation of the FDG ideology be considered as full in harmony with SP's lastly expressed intentions?**

Clarification needed: "We feel that it is necessary here to point out briefly—just a single paragraph—where the *ṛtvikists* are wrong according to our application of *pramāṇa-tattva-tāratamya*. Otherwise, many devotees (not just *ṛtvikists*) will misunderstand the intent of our example here."

Clarification allotted: *Ṛtvik* ideology is faulty because of the following reason. In the beginning of the July 9th letter, it is mentioned:

"Recently when all of the GBC members were with His Divine Grace in Vṛndāvana, Śrīla Prabhupāda indicated that soon He would appoint some of His senior disciples to act as "*ṛtvik* - representative of the *ācārya*, for the purpose of performing initiations, both first initiation and second initiation. His Divine Grace has so far given a list of eleven disciples who will act in that capacity:"

Remarks (RKDB) – So, a clear indirect reference to the May 28th conversation is made in the July 9th letter's opening quoted above. Since the May 28th conversation was with the GBC and BBT members, it cannot be considered to be a mere informal conversation of SP on the level of 4th class evidence (which it would normally be if it were to be an informal conversation with non-GBC members). By studying the nature of that May 28th conversation, it is made clear that the said conversation was a fully formal conversation and many questions were asked by SDG which clearly meant that after the demise of SP, by which method the GBC and BBT should function. Then SP gave appropriate replies. **So, although it was a conversation, due to its extremely formal nature and due to its having being mentioned in a specifically indirect way in the very first lines of the July 9th ordinance letter, the said conversation also comes par with the July 9th letter, in terms of authenticity and hierarchical evidence.** Due to close connectivity with the May 28th conversation, the July 9th letter has to be interpreted harmoniously with the specific clarification that SP made in May 28th conversation. When repeatedly asked by SDG, SP had clarified thus:

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: Is that called *ṛtvik-ācārya*?

Prabhupāda: *Ṛtvik*, yes.

Satsvarūpa: Then what is the relationship of that person who gives the initiation and the...

Prabhupāda: He's guru. He's guru.

Satsvarūpa: But he does it on your behalf.

Prabhupāda: Yes. That is formality. Because in my presence one should not become guru, so on my behalf, on my order... *Āmāra ajñāya guru hañā* [Cc. Madhya 7.128]. Be actually guru, but by my order.

Satsvarūpa: So they may also be considered your disciples.

Prabhupāda: Yes, they are disciples. Why consider? Who?

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: No, he's asking that these *ṛtvik-ācāryas*, they're officiating, giving *dīkṣā*. Their... The people who they give *dīkṣā* to, whose disciple are they?

Prabhupāda: They're his disciple.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: They're his disciple.

Prabhupāda: Who is initiating. He is grand-disciple.

Satsvarūpa: Yes.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: That's clear.

Remarks (RKDB) – Isn't this clear enough to interpret the July 9th letter? Also, the *siddhānta* of a live *dīkṣā-guru-paramparā* can never be overruled by the decree of any *ācārya* coming in that *paramparā*. How can any *ācārya* belonging to any bona fide *sampradāya* (i.e. in our case is SP) stop the very fundamental principle of the *paramparā* by implementing *ṛtvikism* in an unconditional way? Otherwise, it will become heterodox like Sikhism (i.e. an offshoot of Hinduism and mixed with Islamic beliefs) which has prohibited the *guru-paramparā* system by considering their holy book to be the only guru. But, this is not the convention of Sanātana Vedic Dharma.

3) The true import of the SB 1.4.32's Purport.

“Actually, Dhruva Mahārāja's mother, Sunīti, was his *patha-pradarśaka-guru*. *Patha-pradarśaka-guru* means "the guru, or the spiritual master, who shows the way." Such a guru is sometimes called *śikṣā-guru*. Although Nārada Muni was his *dīkṣā-guru* (initiating spiritual master), Sunīti, his mother, was the first who gave him instruction on how to achieve the favour of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. It is the duty of the *śikṣā-guru* or *dīkṣā-guru* to instruct the disciple in the right way, and it depends on the disciple to execute the process. According to *śāstric* injunctions, there is no difference between *śikṣā-guru* and *dīkṣā-guru*, and generally the *śikṣā-guru* later on becomes the *dīkṣā-guru*. Sunīti, however, being a woman, and specifically his mother, could not become Dhruva Mahārāja's *dīkṣā-guru*.”

>>> Ref. VedaBase => SB 4.12.32

Prima Facie contention: "With respect to 4.12.32, Śrīla Prabhupāda writes that Sunīti could not initiate Dhruva because she was a woman, and specifically his mother. This raises a question: What if she was not his mother?

The problem with using this statement from the Purport of 4.12.32 as evidence that women can never give *dīkṣā* is that it is not directly answering the question of whether women can give *dīkṣā*. It refers indirectly to the issue, in passing, in the course of explaining why Sunīti did not become *dīkṣā-guru* of Dhruva (although she was his *śikṣā-guru*)."

Our answer: Womanhood of Sunīti is the first and general reason given by SP as to why she is not able to initiate her son, Dhruva. The motherhood of Sunīti is, however, a more specific reason given. In this case, the general and specific reasons harmoniously complement each other and do not possess mutual contradiction; hence, womanhood of Sunīti was also considered to be an obstacle for her being *dīkṣā-guru* of Dhruva. **When SP says that because she was a woman, it means that womanhood is also an obstacle in giving initiation; however, her being his mother adds on to the previous disqualification. They don't contradict each other.** Neither is former overridden by the later. We don't get any sense of such while reading SP's original statements. This puts to rest all of the antagonists' arguments.

But still the antagonists will not remain silent and will give rise to another provocative remark by asserting that if indeed, the womanhood of Sunīti was an obstacle for her exercising the *dīkṣā-guru* powers, then why were great personalities like Jāhnavā Thākuraṇī allowed to be *dīkṣā-gurus* in our precedent Gaudīya line? Were not they women too?

Our answer is that Sunīti was not a *nitya-siddha* (eternal associate of the Lord) *pāṣada* of the Lord. Actually, she was still on a *sādhaka* (till the rise of *prema-bhakti*, a devotee is considered to be on a

sādhaka platform) platform when she had advised Dhruva Mahārāja on the path of devotional service. She was on a *sādhaka* level because till that time she did not have the direct vision and factual realization of the Lord as Dhruva had later on after being instructed by her. **Hence, Sunīti, being on a *sādhaka*'s level at that time, could not transgress the prohibitive injunction denying *dīkṣā-guru* rights to the feminine gender; whereas, since Jāhnavā Mātā was a *nitya-siddha-rāgātmika-pārṣada* of Lord Kṛṣṇa in the form of 'anaṅga-mañjari' (as evident in *Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā*), it was her special prerogative to transgress the ordinary law.**

Question: "Isn't the threshold of being off the *sādhaka* platform "*bhāva bhakti*"?"

Answer: "While commenting on the "*kṛti-sādhya bhavet sādhyā-bhāvā sā sādhanābhidhā*" verse of B.R.S., Viśvanātha Cakravartipāda quotes the two later verses of B.R.S 1) "*avijñatākhillākṣāḥ.....*" and 2) "*aprāptanirvighnāḥ.....*" to show that upon ascending the level of *bhāva bhakti*, the devotee can be truly considered to be a *sādhaka*. Before such a platform is ascended (during the stage of *sādhana-bhakti* which continues up to the level of *āsakti*), he is not to be considered a *sādhaka* even. And, only on the level of *prema-bhakti*, a devotee can be considered to be a *siddha*.

Hearing the concrete reply of ours, the antagonists will become further agitated and will proclaim that due to Sunīti's family relation as mother (obviously woman) Dhruva didn't take her as spiritual master. For example, in more recent times, Bhaktivinoda Thākura did not initiate his son, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura Prabhupāda, considering that one should not become the *dīkṣā guru* of one's child. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura recommended Śrīla Gaura Kīśora Dāsa Bābājī to his son for the same reason. Certainly he was qualified to accept his son as guru. So why is S.B. 1.4.32's purport continually used to justify no FDG?

Confutation: Not quite so. The argument that since Dhruva Mahārāja is the son of Sunīti and was therefore unable to accept her mother as *dīkṣā-guru* and if Sunīti would not have remained his mother then, he would have certainly chosen her as his *dīkṣā-guru*, is untenable because of the due reasons.

There is no *śāstra-pramāṇa* that says a father cannot initiate his son. We know of several members of Śrī Sampradāya, very orthodox *vaiṣṇava brāhmaṇas*, who were initiated by their fathers. In Kṛṣṇa's Vedic civilization this system is called *svayam-ācārya*. We recently had a conversation with Muralīdhara Bhaṭṭara, one of the chief *arcakas* in Śrīraṅgam and he informed us that he got his *pañca-saṁskāra* (*vaiṣṇava-dīkṣā*) from his own father Śrīmān Raṅgarāja Bhaṭṭar who was chief *arcaka* of Śrīraṅgam (and a great friend of ISKCON). Also, in Vallabha-Sampradāya or Puṣṭi Mārga, all the 7 *pīṭhams* and their successors are *grhastha-gosvāmī* successors of Vallabhācārya and father initiates his son and makes him his successor on the respective *pīṭham*. To date, this is continued. In Mādhva Sampradāya *brahmins* also, at many times the regular *vaiṣṇava-dīkṣā*s as well as the *upanayanam-saṁskāra* can be taken from one's father. Only *sannyāsa* has to be compulsorily taken from the Mādhva *sannyāsis*. Aside from this living tradition there is a statement in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam about Jaḍa Bharata's father teaching his son the *gāyatrī mantra*.

"Jaḍa Bharata behaved before his father like a fool, despite his father's adequately instructing him in Vedic knowledge. He behaved in that way so that his father would know that he was unfit for instruction and would abandon the attempt to instruct him further. He would behave in a completely opposite way. Although instructed to wash his hands after evacuating, he would wash them before. **Nonetheless, his father wanted to give him Vedic instructions during the spring and summer. He tried to teach him the**

***gāyatrī mantra* along with *omkāra* and *vyāhrti*, but after four months, his father still was not successful in instructing him.” Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 5.9.6**

The above analysis clearly shows that Jaḍa Bharata’s father was his guru. It is the *dīkṣā guru* who teaches the *gāyatrī mantra* as per the post-SBSST convention in our line.

The factual reason why BVT did not initiate SBSST was to make SBSST realize that scholarship alone is not the only qualification to be raised to the highest platform of devotional service, rather taking asylum unto the lotus feet of a *premī-bhakta* is required qualification. Since, GKDB was not a scholar but still a *siddha-bhakta*, BVT purposefully sent SBSST to GKDB in order to make SBSST realize this point. **On the contrary, we see that Advaita Ācārya Prabhu initiated Acyutānanda Prabhu i.e. his son.** Therefore, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura had his own reasons for wanting SBSST to take initiation from Gaura Kīśora Dāsa Bābājī. But it is purely a (wrong) speculation that he didn’t initiate his son because of the father and son relationship. Perhaps he wanted to teach SBSST humility for in SBSST’s own words his rejection by Gaura Kīśora Dāsa Bābājī had a profound effect on him. Here he was a great scholar rejected by an illiterate man who could not even sign his own name. **Hence, it is certain that it was not because SBSST was his son. Conclusively, the contention that because Sunīti was a woman (i.e. motherhood is naturally based on womanhood and so the womanhood is the underlying factor and not so much the motherhood), therefore, she was considered unfit to become *dīkṣā-guru* of Dhruva Maharaja, remains undefeated.**

A sharp contrast between BVT (this includes Jaḍa Bharata’s father also) and Sunīti is that the in the latter’s case, the motherhood of Sunīti is causing obstruction for her to act as Dhruva’s FDG (female *dīkṣā guru*) because of the fundamental substratum of womanhood found pervasive in the motherhood, whereas, in the former’s case, the fatherhood of BVT (includes Jaḍa Bharata’s father too) doesn’t create obstruction for him to act as SBSST’s MDG (male *dīkṣā guru*) despite BVT’s manhood underlying his fatherhood. **The sum and substance is that since, men are allowed to be *dīkṣā-gurus*, their fatherhood does not create any obstruction. Contrastingly, since women are not permitted to be *dīkṣā-gurus*, their motherhood also becomes an obstruction.**

An antagonist: “This argument doesn’t work, because you argue that motherhood infers womanhood and that womanhood in turn is the actual disqualification for being a *dīkṣā-guru*. But SP mentions two distinct criteria “womanhood” and “motherhood.” You will have to find a *pramāṇa* that applies uniquely to motherhood (for example, Mother Earth transformed herself into a cow so that Mahārāja Pṛthu would not kill her -- both her being a woman and a cow were independent grounds for sparing her, that is, one did not depend on the other. That a cow is not to be harmed is independent of the fact that a cow is also female.), otherwise SP’s statement regarding motherhood will be left unexplained or wrong on account of making a distinction without a difference.”

Our answer: “We do understand your subtle point. Many times, father acts as an *ācārya* as we have just shown. *Ācārya* means guru who gives *mantras*. But, mother never acts as per that capacity of a *dīkṣā-guru*. Therefore, Jaḍabharata was given *brahma-gāyatrī* by his father but Sunīti could not even give the 12 syllable “*Oṃ namo bhagavate vāsudevaya*” (a *purāṇic mantra*) to her son Dhruva. So, it is the womanhood which is an actual problem and motherhood is just an additional factor arising out of womanhood. But still if we want to give an independent relevance to the motherhood, the only possible explanation is that since motherhood by nature is emotionally sensitive and sentimentally affectionate and bias for one’s child (this is the actuality in this world and reflects in 99.9% cases), and whereas, the *dīkṣā-guruship* requires both the qualities of ‘*anugraha*’ and ‘*nigraha*’ (‘*nigraha-anugraha-samartha*’ –

i.e. capable of bestowing blessings and punishment)i.e. the power of mercifully and affectionately blessing the disciple by becoming as soft as a rose flower and the power of chastising and punishing the disciple by becoming as hard as a thunder-bolt without becoming bias for the disciple (a guru has to guide his disciple without undertaking any bias sentimental approach for him), the motherhood thus stands unfit for the *dīkṣā-guruship* of a son cum disciple.”

Evidence – H.B.V. 1.41 (the section describing the specific qualities of a *dīkṣā-guru*) –

“nigrahānugrāhe śakto homa-mantra-parāyaṇaḥ |”

Rendition

“One who is eligible to punish and bless a disciple and who is engaged in the performance of sacrifices and the chanting of mantras (such are the *viśeṣa* or specific qualities of a *dīkṣā-guru*).”

4) Generalized propositions overruled by the strength of contrary specified statements.

Regarding antagonists’ other argument as to the availability of numerous instructions on the allowance of women gurus given by SP, our answer is that in those pro-women *guruship* instructions, SP never specifically clarifies as to whether those women can be *dīkṣā-gurus* or not, since in our *sampradāya*, there are four categories of gurus according to Jīva Gosvāmī’s Bhakti Sandarbha. They are: 1) *Vartma-pradarśaka-guru*, 2) *Dīkṣā-guru*, 3) *Śikṣā-guru*, and 4) *Bhajana* or *Śravaṇa-Guru*. SP very clearly and specifically states that Sunīti’s womanhood and motherhood was not an obstacle in her becoming Dhruva’s *śikṣā-guru* and *vartma-pradarśaka-guru*. So, whenever and wherever SP indicates a possibility for a woman guru, he means only the roles of *śikṣā* and *vartma-pradarśaka gurus*. This clarification by SP puts to rest all inconsistencies appearing in pro-woman-*dīkṣā-guru* and anti-woman-*dīkṣā-guru* statements found in SP’s overall teachings of various hierarchical categories. **The basic rule of interpretation is that when a general rule is either ambiguous or in confrontation (not when a general rule is not explicit and doesn’t have confrontation with a specified rule as rightfully shown under the analysis of the first heading of this essay) with a specified rule, then such a general rule is overruled by a specified rule.** Precedents of this ideal are clear seen by referring to the *visarga-sandhi* section of the *Vaiyākaraṇa-siddhānta-kaumudī* of Bhaṭṭojī Dīkṣit (the most famous treatise on Pāṇinī’s Sanskrit grammar today) and especially the following aphorisms of Pāṇinī’s *Aṣṭādhyāyī* quoted and treated within that section in a sequence: I) 8.2.66, II) 8.3.15, III) 8.3.34, IV) 8.3.36, and V) 8.3.37. In his interpretation, the famous master of grammar gives succeeding emphasis on every specified statement and puts a general statement in precedence.

5) Harmonious and consistent exposition of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s letter to Hamsadūta dated 1st of January, 1969.

Letter to Hamsadūta on Jan 1st, 1969:

“I want that all of my spiritual sons and daughters will inherit this title of Bhaktivedānta, so that the

family transcendental diploma will continue through the generations. Those possessing the title of Bhaktivedānta will be allowed to initiate disciples. Maybe by 1975, all of my disciples will be allowed to initiate and increase the numbers of the generations. That is my program."

RKD's comments: There is yet another explanation which is in betterment than any erroneous and apparently pro-FDG interpretation of Hamsadūta's epistle. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī and Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa implicitly allude to an example of *nyāya-darśanam* (vide Tarka-Sangrahaḥ of Annam Bhaṭṭa), while composing exegesis on the S.B. 11.5.32 verse in their Krama-sandarbha, Sarva-Samvādinī (to the invocation verse of his Tattva-Sandarbha) and Vaiṣṇavānandinī commentaries. The actual *nyāya* has been defined as thus: "**viruddha-dharma-samavāyebhūyasāṁsyātsadharmakatvam ; chatrīṇogacchanti - itinyāyah**" and which is literally defined as: "Objects/entities mutually distinct in nature, if found in lesser quantity than their counter-parts, superficially acquire the status/designation of those in vast numbers; people carrying sunshades are going". Now, it can be said that though there might be (as for instance 10 people) few people in the assemblage who are not carrying parasols, but still, since the majority of the folks in the flock are carrying umbrellas, in an aggregative (i.e. the majority holding umbrella as well as the minority not possessing it) way, they are generally termed as 'possessors of umbrellas' or '**chatrīṇo**'. Following the same manner, in the present context also, Hamsadūta's epistle can be harmoniously (i.e. in congruence with the dual anti-FDG evidences of 1977) defined as follows: "Those possessing the title of Bhaktivedānta will be allowed to initiate disciples." Aforesaid is the actual statement as visible in the letter. Its bona fide interpretation runs thus: **Among all those who are possessors of the 'Bhaktivedānta' title, both genders are found. Here SP's intention confirms that he is in full cognition from the scriptures and tradition that women are forbidden to allot initiation (as evident in his S.B. 4.12.32 purport), but still, following abovementioned logic of 'chatrīṇogacchantiitinyāyah', S.P. has made an insertion of even the female bearers of the 'Bhaktivedānta' title into the aforesaid proposition.** The wise will understand the quintessence and those of dull wits will not be able to assimilate.

Antagonists' 1st objection: "This argument is wrong because the plain meaning of SP's statement explicitly includes women.

In terms of grammar, the pronoun "those" at the start of the second sentence refers to its immediate antecedent, which is "all my sons and daughters", which is also equivalent to "all my sons and all my daughters". The second sentence which describes who may initiate therefore includes women.

For example, in criticizing a text, between two versions of the same passage, if one version conforms more closely with the general way in which SP typically said something, then the passage that most closely resembles the general way that SP said something is to be taken over the one that less closely resembles his general way of speech or writing. Textual criticism based on this method has therefore been classified by scholars of textual criticism as the school of eclectic analogy--"eclectic" because sources of textual authority are rarely if ever comprehensive and intact, and "analogy" because of presumed conformance to a mean (unless a deviation from the mean is warranted - hence this also merits the attribute of being "eclectic").

This textual critical school of eclectic analogy has been practiced by our *ācāryas*, too. S.M. Khatre in his 1954 book titled "Introduction to Indian Textual Criticism" (Poona: Deccan College) has noted that Madhvācārya (our Madhvācārya) created an edition of the Mahābhārata by criticizing manuscripts he acquired while travelling throughout India. From those manuscripts he determined which versions are

authentic and which are inauthentic. Jayādvaita Svāmī has also followed a similar process in producing critical, clear-text editions of Śrīla Prabhupāda's works.

And we have also used a similar approach to criticizing your interpretation of the passage in question (letter to Hamsadūta in 1969). Not only does the explicit inclusion of women warrant a belief that SP intended that his female disciples in the future would be *dīkṣā-gurus* (i.e. accept disciples), but that interpretation is defensible because it conforms to the way Śrīla Prabhupāda generally spoke. On the grounds of Śrīla Prabhupāda's general way of speaking, when he speaks in plain, unequivocal sentences, we are to take the direct meaning. If he explicitly includes women in his description of who can initiate (and he does), then we have to accept that this was an expression of his intention. We reject the alternative interpretation that SP did not intend to include women as *dīkṣā-gurus* on the grounds that this is not how SP normally spoke.”

Clarification on antagonists’ 1st objection: “Our interpretation stands fully correct because, one aspect has to be understood clearly that any textual criticism based on eclectic analogy should only be considered as bona fide practice when application of such a textual criticism does not undermine the ‘*mūla-bhūta siddhānta*’ or ‘the fundamental principles of Vedic culture and philosophy’. Many times in the *śāstras* (We can confidently say that the antagonists don’t have a vast exposure to the writings of our previous *ācāryas* esp. like Bhaktivinoda Thākura and Jīva Gosvāmī etc. and thus they have no idea of the detrimental effects that can occur while applying the theory of eclectic textual interpretation in certain circumstances.), we find that certain statements which are found written, if, are interpreted according to the eclectic way of textual criticism that you follow, they sharply contradict the fundamental *siddhānta*. Though, there are many examples, we shall cite one of them.

Example --- Background --- In the *gauḍīya vaiṣṇava* literature and esp. in the Bhakti-sandarbhā of Jīva Gosvāmī, it is strictly prohibited for a *vaiṣṇava sādḥaka* following *bhakti-mārga* to undergo any sort of *aham-graha-upāsana*. Viśvanātha also elaborates on this *aham-grahopāsana* within his commentary to B.G. There are many types of *aham-grahopāsana*s. They are also described in the *Purāṇas* and *Upaniṣads*. But these *aham-grahopāsana*s are prohibited for devotees performing pure devotional service. The most famous form of *aham-graho-pāsana* is when a *sādḥaka* considers himself as same as the deity he is worshiping and consequently starts worshiping and contemplating on that deity considering it to be non-different from one's own self. But there are other secondary types of *aham-grahopāsana*s too. One of them is when a *sādḥaka* considers his guru or some other *bhakta* to be identically non-different from either Bhagavān or His eternal associates and thus starts contemplating and worshiping one's guru or other *vaiṣṇavas* in the same way. Such *aham-graho-pāsana* is also prohibited for *śuddha-bhaktas*. Now we shall see, that if we apply the antagonists’ theory of direct textual explanation based on the way of eclectic analogy, we will fail to uphold the pure Gauḍīya standard of BVT's writings. Because, *Gauḍīya sampradāya* does not accept any tinge of *aham-grahopāsana* of any category, we will have to resort to an indirect explanation of BVT's statements found in the below cited excerpt of Jaiva Dharma. Such an indirect explanation will not be based on the textual criticism of eclectic analogy. Normally, when BVT states something in his philosophical novel like Jaiva Dharma, he states everything in a very straight forward way. In the example cited below, he will also use his same straightforward typical style (SP also had a straightforward style of speaking as the antagonists and we both accept) of presentation. But, if that passage of Jaiva Dharma is interpreted in a plain way based on their textual criticism, the said interpretation of BVT's writing will become infested with the venom of *aham-grahopāsana*. In order to avoid that, no option remains except for an indirect interpretation (the same strategy that we have utilized while interpreting Hamsadūta's letter; their argument that SP knew that there are precedents of female *dīkṣā gurus* in the older history of Gauḍīya

Sampradāya and hence, SP cannot ever say that females cannot become *dīksā gurus*, is wrong. Why? Because, in the post-SBSST line, the form of second initiation that is prevalent requires even a female *dīksā guru* to bestow a sacred thread on her disciples; but to do so is not possible for an FDG because that FDG lacks the sacred thread herself. Therefore, while writing letter to Hamsadūta, SP knew that FDG is a completely inapplicable concept within ISKCON and post-SBSST styled initiations i.e. *dīkṣās* and therefore, our interpretation of SP's intention as based on Jīva Gosvami's implicitly alluding interpretation of the Garga Muni's statement found in 10.8.13 - stands irrefutable and fully correct.) of BVT's text. There are two-fold factors of interpretation in the traditional Sanskrit literature. One is known as *śabda-śakti* and the other is known as *artha-śakti*. So, when a statement is interpreted by the power of its words, it is known as *śabda-śakti-ghaṭana*. This is the same textual criticism that the contenders are alluding to. However, when a text is interpreted according to the implication and intention of that statement, then it is known as *artha-śakti-ghaṭana*. So, when the fundamentals of *siddhānta* seem cornered by an interpretation of a text following the method of *śabda-śakti* (this is their way), then such texts have to be interpreted following the method of *artha-śakti* and also by deploying various *nyāyas* (ways of logic) and *mimāṃsā* rules. In the case of BVT, we shall see the same happening. We are citing from the page no. 266 of the Bengālī edition of Jaiva Dharma of BVT found on the following website: http://ia601507.us.archive.org/9/items/SriJaivaDharma/jaiva_dharma_text.pdf.

First let us examine the original Bengālī writing of BVT and then we shall talk about its interpretation. It is found at the end of the 21st Ch. of Jaiva Dharma. The excerpt is as follows. We are producing the roman transliteration of Bengālī.

"aścaryera viṣaya ei ye sei dina hoite vijaya kumārera citte śrīmatī lalitāra dāsī bhāva āsiyā upasthita haila. tini vṛddha bābājīke śrī lalitā rūpe darśana karite lāgilena. brajanāth sei dina hoite vṛddha bābājīra svarūpe subalake dekhite lāgilena."

Background: Here, two disciples by the name of Vrajanātha and Vijaya Kumāra are having a dialogue with their guru i.e. Bābājī. Vrajanātha is in the mood of a *mañjarī* and considers himself as a servant of Lalitā Devī whereas, Vijaya Kumāra is in the mood of a *sakhā* considering himself as a companion of Subala.

Straight-forward translation of BVT's text following the rule of textual criticism based on eclectic analogy (This translation will have serious philosophical defects and inconsistencies).

"It was a matter of surprise that from that day on, that the mood of being Śrīmatī Lalitā's maidservant (dāsī) arose within the heart of Vijaya Kumāra. He (Vijaya Kumāra) began to behold the old bābājī (his guru) in the form of Lalitā Devī. Brajanātha also started beholding Subala in the 'svarūpa' of that old bābājī."

Analysis of the above translation: Now, to see their guru i.e. Bābājī in the form of Lalitā Devī is a clear cut example of *aham-grahopāsanā*. It is clear from the *gauḍīya* philosophical texts like Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā 1.47.53 & C.C. 1.10.15 that apart from Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī, no one else in the *sampradāya* is considered to be an incarnation of Śrīmatī Lalitā. In our *sampradāya*, there has been no other Subal Sakhā apart from Rāya Rāmānanda as evident in G.G.D. 120-124 and C.C. 10.134. To say that Subala is present in the 'svarūpa' of that old Bābājī (this is what the straight-forward translation comes out to be) means the same as to say that Subala is present in the 'inner identity' of that Bābājī implying the ontological non-distinction of that Bābājī from Subala Sakhā. If such words would have been used for Rāya Rāmānanda (who is actually Subala in identity or 'svarūpa'), it would have been considered fully

legitimate. 'Svarūpa' means 'one's own ontological identity' which means 'one's own inner self'. How can Subala Sakhā be considered to be the 'inner ontological identity' of that old Bābā Jī. If so considered, the *aham-grahopasanā* in the form of *Māyāvāda* becomes prevalent. In the same way, how can it be said that Vijaya Kumāra began to saw his guru as Lalitā. His guru is not Lalitā, ontologically speaking. Such words would have befitted the description of Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī who is Lalitā, ontologically believing. If we say that there occurred an 'āveśa' (empowered presence of the Lord and his eternal associates) of both Lalitā and Subala within the form of that Bābājī just as it had happened with the Nṛsimhānanda Brahmācārī in C.C. Antya-līlā (there was a *nṛsimha-āveśa* in Nṛsimhānanda Brahmācārī) and the Bābājī remained ontologically different from both Lalitā and Subala, then also it is not correct. Why? Because we don't find a similar vivid description applied for this old Bābājī which is found applied for Nṛsimhānanda Brahmācārī in very clearly expressible terms in C.C. 1.10.35 and its purport. There is no indication given here by BVT that the said Bābājī was also having a simultaneous *āveśa* of both the Subala and Lalitā. Therefore, considering all these factors, the direct way of straightforward interpretation of the above listed sentences of BVT directly support the *advaitavādī/māyāvādī* conception of variant *aham-grahopāsana*s. At the end of the Rāga-vartma-candrikā of Viśvanātha Cakravartī, there is a clear cut prohibition for the *rāga-mārgīs* to not to undergo any type of *aham-grahopāsana*. To consider that Bābājī as Lalitā and Subala is certainly a variant of *advaita-vāda* (i.e. monism), because we would be trying to say that ontologically three distinct entities i.e. Subala, Lalitā, and Bābājī are one and the same. We should also remember, that whenever in the *śāstras*, guru has been considered non-different from Hari, Jīva Gosvāmī interprets such statements in his Bhakti Sandarbha and Viśvanātha in his Gurvaṣṭakam as that the status of their (gurus') being dear-most to Hari makes them non-different from Hari (but not ontologically). But in the present context of Jaiva Dharma's above statements, even such interpretation cannot be applied because, there is a very clear indication by BVT that both Brajanātha and Vijaya Kumāra literally saw (*darśana karite lāgilena* and *dekhite lāgilena*) their guru's 'svarūpa' and 'rūpa' or the 'form' and 'inner ontological identity' as the self-same as Subala and Lalitā.

So, does it mean that BVT did not know the *siddhānta*? No. As being the true loyal followers of bona fide *guru-paramparā* full of *siddha-ācāryas*, we can never accept that BVT who is *kamala-maṇi-mañjarī* in the *nitya-līlā* can ever commit such a great philosophical mistake. So, what is the solution then? The solution is the below mentioned way of indirect interpretation (we have also used the same method of interpretation using the additional *nyāya* alluded by Jīva Gosvāmī in the context of S.B. 10.8.13; we have to remember that just as how BVT has plainly spoken here, in the same way, Garga Muni has also spoken in 10.8.3 of S.B.) which does not become incompatible with the *śāstra-siddhānta* and also retains the meaning of the BVT's Bengālī statements intact. How? Let us see.

Conclusive answer -- 1st evidence -- While commenting on S.B. 5.1812 in B.R.S. 1.1.29, Jīva Gosvāmī says that: **"surāḥ bhagavadādayaḥ. sa ca tathā tatparikarā devā munayaścetyarthaḥ. samāsate vaśībhūtya tiṣṭhantītyarthaḥ"**

Translation: **"Great demigods come and reside within the body of a pure devotee means that those great personalities who are related with the Supreme Personality of Godhead (*tadīya* or *bhagavadīya*) (related through the bond of devotional service) such as His eternal associates, heavenly demigods who are devotees of the Lord (like Brahmā, Śiva etc.) and great sages (like four Kumāras, Nārada etc.). They live (*samāsate*) means they all come and inhabit within the personality of that pure devotee becoming subjugated to him."**

2nd evidence -- "*kṛtvā hariṁ prema-bhājam priya-varga samanvitam / bhaktirvaśī karotīti śrīkṛṣṇākarṣiṇī matā //*" Translation - "**Prema-bhakti makes Lord Hari along with His eternal associates subjugated and forcefully attracted (just like iron is attracted to a magnet) towards that *premī-bhakta* and therefore it is known as *śrī-kṛṣṇa-ākarsṇī*.**"

Conclusion: Since it is proved by the above two quotations that within the heart and personality of a pure devotee, Lord Kṛṣṇa along with His eternal associates comes and resides, now we can rightfully interpret the above quoted BVT's statements found in Jaiva Dharma as follows.

True translation of BVT's statements quoted above in Bengālī.

"It was a matter of surprise that from that day on, the mood of being Śrīmatī Lalitā's maidservant arose within the heart of Vijaya Kumāra. He (Vijaya Kumāra) began to realize ('*darśana karite lāgilena*' - in highly philosophical terms, *darśana* - according to the *artha-śakti* and not the *śabda-śakti* -- means to realize) the presence of Lalitā Devī within the personality (*rūpe*) of the old Bābājī. Brajanātha also started realizing ('*dekhite lāgilena*' -- same interpretation as of the term 'darśana' through its *artha-śakti*) Subala's presence in the personality ('*svarūpe*') of that Bābājī. "

This is the true translation but unfortunately, all the translated editions of Jaiva Dhrama in Hindi and English that we have come across including the Sarvabhāvana's (an ISKCON devotee) and Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja's - have translated those passages literally through *śabda-śakti* and are thus erroneous. Now one can again argue that to consider the presence of Lalitā and Subala within the personality of Bābājī is equivalent to say that there was an *āveśa* (empowered presence) of Subala and Lalitā in the form of that Bābājī. No. If we consider the regular presence of Subala and Lalitā within the personality of that Bābājī, then it would mean that all *premī-bhaktas* (those who are on the stage of *prema-bhakti*) in general have *āveśas* of Lord Hari and all of his associates. But, such an interpretation would again become incompatible with the unique, rare, and peculiar feature of the *jīva-śaktyāveśas* (there are two types of *śaktyāveśas* - refer to Laghu-bhagavatāmṛta; first is the *bhagavad-śaktyāveśa* which means Bhagavān himself descending as an *āveśa avatāra* and second is the *jīva-śaktyāveśa* which means lord empowering and becoming present in some particular *jīva* for a time being). And if so accepted, all contemporary devotees and associates of Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu should have His (Lord Caitanya's) *āveśa* or Nṛsimha's empowered presence and that if so, it would have been mentioned by Kavirāja Gosvāmī. But that has not been mentioned. Only Nṛsimhānanda Brahmācārī has been mentioned as containing Nṛsimha's *āveśa*. Therefore, to say that the regular presence of the Lord and His eternal associates within the heart of a *premī-bhakta* is the same as an *āveśa* - is incorrect. In *āveśa*, a devotee who is empowered, is literally seen by spectators as having emerging presence of Hari i.e. just like if there is a *nṛsimha-āveśa*, the devotee will start acting like Lord Nṛsimhadeva etc. **Therefore, our translation stands correct whereas, the literal translation stands incorrect. In the same way, our interpretation of SP's letter also stands correct.**

Let's note one simple fact. What is the most straight-forward definition of the so-called *mahāvākya* of the *māyāvādīs* taken from the *upaniṣads* i.e. "**tat tvam asi**"? It is "**Thou art that**". According to grammar, this is the most direct primary meaning of this Vedic statement. But, all the *vaiṣṇava sampradāyas* and their respective *ācāryas* don't accept this most direct meaning of *Tattvamasī*. Why? Because, accepting a direct meaning of this statement will make all the other statements found in the Vedas as futile. *Māyāvādīs* interpret all the pro-*dvaita* (pro-dualistic) statements in Vedas as illusory statements and this *Tattvamasī* alone as a factual statement. So, if we follow the logic of our contenders, then *Tattvamasī* should be interpreted as "Thou (living entity) are That (is the Absolute Truth)". So, what we meant to say

is that at many places in the *śāstras*, in order to keep the fundamentals intact, we have to resort to a complex process of interpretation. If our *ācāryas* like Jīva and Baladeva (in their commentaries to the first verse of Tattva-sandarbha) would not have resorted to that, than they could not have established Caitanya Mahāprabhu as the true import of the SB 11.5.32 verse. The straight meaning of that verse doesn't confirm Mahāprabhu as an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa. But, if the straight meaning were to be accepted, then such a meaning would certainly go against the other words found in the verse itself and also against other verses found in other *Purāṇas* and Mahābhārat. So, it is not that such a tactic is abnormal or rarely used. It has been frequently used.

Antagonists' 2nd Objection:

***upakramopasaṁhārāv abhyāso 'pūrvatā-phalam /
artha-vāadopapattī ca liṅgaṁ tātparya-nirṇaye //***

Rendition

"The *upakrama* (beginning), *upasaṁhāra* (ending), *abhyāsa* (what is repeated again and again), *apūrvatā* (what is unique and novel), *phalam* (the general purpose of the book), *artha-vāda* (the author's statement of his own intention), and *upapatti* (appropriateness) are the factors to consider in interpretation of obscure passages."

Clarification on the 2nd objection of antagonists: Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇapāda has taken said quotation from the Mādhva-Bhāṣya on Brahma-sūtras and commentaries of Jaya Tīrtha etc. on it. Although this is a general rule, many times we have to interpret a specific subject matter depicted in a specific book only in synopsis by the assistance of those books wherein, the same matter has been described elaborately. Just like the Jaiva Dharma passages (earlier shown by us) clearly refer to *aham-grahopāsana* if they are not interpreted according to the *siddhānta* of Bhakti Sandarbha and Rāgavartmacandrikā.

Also, the six-fold criterion of interpretation listed above cannot be made applicable to the contents contained within the referenced passage of Jaiva Dharma's 21st chapter (cited earlier). Why? Because, the first twenty chapters of the Jaiva Dharma do not deal with the topic of *rāgānugā-bhakti* at all. *Rāgānugā-bhakti*'s discussion has commenced from this chapter only and all the succeeding passages of this chapter reveal new information on the topic at every step. Hence, the *upakrama* feature of the *ṣaḍ-liṅga* cannot be applied to the said passage and hence, the way the said passage has been interpreted while avoiding the possibilities of *aham-grahopasana* etc. is correct.

The concept of *siddha-svarūpa's sādhanā* (i.e. that a disciple should look upon his guru as a *siddha-mañjarī* or a *siddha-sakha* in the *nitya-līlā*) as mentioned in the said passage of 21st Ch., is revealed for the very first time in the book and will be not be emphasized or even mentioned later on. So, even the *upasaṁhāra*, *abhyāsa*, *apūrvatā*, *phala*, and *upapatti* features are inapplicable. Hence, only option for correct interpretation is resorting to other books like the Sandarbhas, Rāgavartmacandrikā, Ujjvala-nīlmaṇi, and Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu wherein, a detailed exposition of such topics is given.

If this *ṣaḍ-liṅga* criterion is applied to Haṁsadūta's letter, the analysis can be done as follows. Earlier to SP's letter to Haṁsadūta, no other pro-female guru instruction is found in SP's lectures, conversations, letters, and writings. All other seemingly pro-FDG instructions by SP in various categories of evidences like i) an interview with Professor O' Connell, June 18th, 1976 in Toronto, ii) a room conversation with

Ātreya Ṛṣi on 29th June, 1972 in San Diego, iii) C.C. 2.8.128's purport, iv) and Vyāsa Pūjā Lecture, London, August 22nd, 1973 -- are found succeeding the Haṁsadūta's letter. Hence, the *upakrama* feature is inapplicable to Haṁsadūta's letter because no seemingly pro-FDG instruction is given by SP prior to that letter. Even those seemingly pro-FDG instructions can be interpreted in the light of S.B. 4.12.32 (a very specific instruction found in the highest level of hierarchical evidence regarding the explicit negative possibility of FDG and containing possibility of an unofficial FSG) to mean allowance of only unofficial FSG's in the preaching field (an analysis of this can be found in our draft elsewhere). Therefore, even according to the other five features of the *ṣad-liṅga* criterion, all apparent pro-FDG instructions of SP succeeding the Haṁsadūta's letter do not support the FDG doctrine. S.B. 4.12.32 should be treated as *apurvatā* or unprecedented unique analysis because such a specific analysis on the possibility of female *guruship* is not done anywhere else in all of SP's instructions on the said issue. Even the possibility of an FSG preacher is denied as a normal rule (FSG ideology can only be applied in exceptional cases) on the grounds of *strī-dharma*'s overriding the preaching aspect. The substantiation can be found in the SP's letter to Arundhatī on 30th July, 1972.

Also, if somebody argues that since *varṇāśrama* is overridden by *bhakti* due to *bhakti*'s superlative status and because preaching KC is directly a part of *bhakti-yoga*, it cannot be philosophically justified that *strī-dharma* can override *bhakti*. Our answer is that *daiva-varṇāśrama* is always favourable to the cultivation of *bhakti-yoga* and even in some complex circumstances where a preferential selection has to be made between the options of *bhakti-yoga* and *daiva-varṇāśrama*, the latter should be opted for, otherwise not accepting so would make SP's letter to Arundhatī turn wrong. Also, when we say that *varṇāśrama* overrides *bhakti*, it should not be interpreted that such is the case because *varṇāśrama* is more important than *bhakti*. Rather, such is the case because *varṇāśrama* is the facilitator of *bhakti*. If *varṇāśrama* is well preserved, only then the *saṁśṭha* and *pariṇśṭha sādhanas* can execute *bhakti* properly. Therefore, since *daiva-varṇāśrama* is always favourable to *bhakti-yoga*, even in some complex situation where only one of the two can be followed, *daiva-varṇāśrama* should be given preference not because it is higher than *bhakti-yoga*, but because, if *daiva-varṇāśrama* is executed properly, it can facilitate the incessant performance of *bhakti-yoga*. As for example, if a devotee feels that by performance of strict *bhakti-yoga* full of austerities, he will not be able to sustain his body longer esp. during the time when some physical calamity has also befallen on him, then he should first opt for the preservation of his body and such efforts for the preservation of the body are not considered part of *bhakti-yoga* and not even Vedic *varṇāśrama dharma*; such efforts are considered as parts of *laukika-dharma* i.e. ordinary duties (*daiva-varṇāśrama* is a Vedic *bhakti-anukūla-karma*). If his body is preserved and protected from a physical malady, then only he can continue to perform the nine-fold limbs of *bhakti-yoga* properly. If the body will not be preserved, how can a person perform his devotional activities? As the idealistic famous saying goes "*śarīra mādhyaṁ khalu dharma-sādhanaṁ*" or "through the gross physical body only both the *varṇāśrama dharma* (regular occupational duties) and the *parama-dharma* (*bhakti-yoga*) can be accomplished". So, if the *laukika-dharma* is protected then only the *varṇāśrama dharma* is protected. If *varṇāśrama dharma* is protected, then only the proper performance of devotional service can be done. This notion finds substantiation in S.B. 7.6.1 which stresses on the fact that devotional service (*bhāgavata-dharma*) can only be accomplished through the instrumental of human body. So, if *mānuṣa-deha* is not protected, how can the *bhāgavata-dharmas* be followed? At the same time, the *nirapekṣa sādhanas* as well as the *siddha-bhaktas* are an exception to this normal rule as will be stated during the analysis of *bhakti* and *varṇāśrama* (in our draft later on).

In the context to SP's letter to Arundhatī, if Arundhatī will not take care of her child (not directly part of *bhakti*, but part of *strī-dharma* i.e. *varṇāśrama*), she might very well lose the opportunity of training her child to become a devotee. To make a *jīva* into a devotee is directly part of *bhakti-yoga* i.e.

preaching KC. Hence, the implementation of *daiva-varṇāśrama* is considered to be overall facilitating the performance of *bhakti-yoga*. Contrarily, if Arundhatī doesn't take care of her child and train him to become a devotee, her child may fail to become a devotee (a great opportunity to make some living entity into a devotee is missed) and thus any sort of preference that Arundhatī might have given to the direct performance of *bhakti-yoga* i.e. deity worship or book distribution etc. might failed to be recognized as real *bhakti* in the eyes of the Lord.

3rd Objection by the antagonists: We feel that no one in ISKCON will accept that in that 1969 letter to Hamsadūta, SP did not mean that he wanted that he wanted his female disciples to initiate.

Clarification on the 3rd objection raised by antagonists: In ISKCON who will mean what is not our concern. If we try to see what every devotee of ISKCON thinks, we will never reach any true conclusion. If 100 million people don't accept our stand, does it mean that we are wrong? Can our interpretation based on the tactics used by *ācāryas* of yore ever go into vain simply because some 100 million people not acquainted with the traditional way of interpreting *śāstras* don't accept it? We have to look according to the *śāstra cakṣu* and how the *ācāryas* like *Jīva Gosvāmī* have interpreted many seemingly straightforward statements in a bit complex way to come to the final conclusion which does not cut down the *mūlabhūta-siddhānta* or the fundamental notions of our philosophy. If we are truly and fully against the very idea of FDG from the root, we are bound to accept this a bit complex explanation of Hamsadūta's letter. No question arises of having an FDG in the post-SBSST *gauḍīya* line. Jāhnavā and others were not giving *upanayanam saṁskāra* to their male disciples. This is enough to presume that SP knew that women cannot become *dīkṣā-gurus* in post-SBSST line. Otherwise, he could have also given women with the sacred thread like what the Ārya Samājīs do.

4th Objection raised by the antagonists: Undoubtedly *siddhānta* is of ultimate importance, as stated by RKDB while addressing our objections. However, the reality of the present issue is more political than philosophical, and public opinion counts.

4th Clarification on the objection of antagonists: We do certainly agree with the comments of antagonists to some extent; but we are also of the opinion that all matters i.e. philosophical, political, social, spiritual, metaphysical etc. should be linked with the *śāstra* and only then we can see everything correctly. Even to understand the mundane world and materialistic life properly, *śāstra* should be applied. If any public opinion tries to reduce the importance of the *śāstra*, that public opinion should not be counted. Only if that public opinion logically or *śāstrically* tries to establish its parallel opinion, should it be accepted. Actually, Vedas describe two types of *vidyās* (knowledge) i.e. *karma-vidyā* (material knowledge) and the *brahma-vidyā* (spiritual knowledge). So, to say that only for spiritual understanding, should the *śāstras* be used seems to be quite an incorrect conjecture. For the same reason, it is stated in the Mahābhārata 1.1.244 that, "**yeṣāṁ śāstrānugā buddhirna te muhyanti bhārata**" meaning "**Those whose intellect follows the dictum of the śāstras never gets bewildered.**" Since there are two types of *śāstras*, 1) for the *pravṛtti mārga* and 2) for the spiritual path of *nivṛtti mārga* - all issues, whether social, political, material, spiritual and others should be looked through the traditional eye of the scriptures only.

6) Ontological comprehension one's *svarūpa* (i.e. we are not bodies, but are souls etc.) doesn't lead into the transgression of *varṇāśrama dharma*.

Though we philosophically know that we are not these bodies and even after we actually realize that we are not these bodies, the etiquette prescribed by the *varṇāśrama dharma* cannot be rejected, unless we are specially empowered *paramahansa* and *nitya-siddha* associates of the Lord. **But, in Gaura-līlā, even those associates never transgressed their prescribed positions according to the *varṇāśrama dharma*. Kindly refer to B.G. 3.20 and its purport as well as C.C. 3.3.45, C.C. 3.4.166, C.C. 3.4.129-132.**

7) Does preaching KC mean transgression of *varṇāśrama dharma*?

Opponents put forth following passages from the Bhaktivedānta Purports to Caitanya Caritāmṛta, Ādi Lila, 7th Chapter, Verses 32nd and 38th. They can use these statements to prove that though Sunīti was not allowed to give *dīkṣā* in Satya-yuga, SP would certainly compromise with females giving *dīkṣā* because his mood was that of preaching and for that he compromised everything (as we will see in the reproduced excerpts below from C.C.) and also because SP has stated in some letters and conversations, that he would like to have women *dīkṣā gurus*. **Of course, the first hand refutation of the antagonists' erroneous interpretation of these C.C. purports is that these purports do not mention anything regarding the allowance of women as *dīkṣā gurus*.** The purports merely talk about the collaborative preaching efforts done by the devotees of both genders and that women devotees are on an equal preaching level to men in the preaching field (as it is evident from the purport).

Here the antagonists can again proclaim that if SP accepts the equality of female and male devotees in the preaching field, then isn't the role of *dīkṣā-guru* a part of the preaching field? If so, why can't the female devotees be allowed to become *dīkṣā-gurus*? Furthermore, as evident in these purports to the C.C., SP at least wanted the Vedic norms to be followed loosely in the western countries, if not in India. So in a spirit of compromise, they request that FDGs be implemented in the Western world but not in India. They can also say that the C.C. is superior in authority to the S.B. and that these passages from C.C. are overruling the S.B. 4.12.32 purport. But these prima facie contentions of opponents are diluted by the analysis given below.

TEXTS 31–32

*tāhā dekhi' mahāprabhu karena cintana
jagat ḍubāite āmi karilun yatana
keha keha eḍāila, pratijñā ha-ila bhaṅga
tā-saba ḍubāite patiba kichu raṅga*

TRANSLATION

Seeing that the *Māyāvādīs* and others were fleeing, Lord Caitanya thought, "I wanted everyone to be immersed in this inundation of love of Godhead, but some of them have escaped. Therefore I shall devise a trick to drown them also."

PURPORT

Here is an important point. Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu wanted to invent a way to capture the *Māyāvādīs* and others who did not take interest in the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. This is the symptom of an *ācārya*. **An *ācārya* who comes for the service of the Lord cannot be expected to conform to a stereotype, for he must find the ways and means by which Kṛṣṇa consciousness may be spread. Sometimes jealous persons criticize the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement because it engages equally both boys and girls in distributing love of Godhead.** Not knowing that boys and girls in countries like Europe and America mix very freely, these fools and rascals criticize the boys and girls in Kṛṣṇa consciousness for intermingling. ***But these rascals should consider that one cannot suddenly change a community's social customs. However, since both the boys and the girls are being trained to become preachers, those girls are not ordinary girls but are as good as their brothers who are preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness.*** Therefore, to engage both boys and girls in fully transcendental activities is a policy intended to spread the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. ***These jealous fools who criticize the intermingling of boys and girls will simply have to be satisfied with their own foolishness because they cannot think of how to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness by adopting ways and means that are favourable for this purpose.*** Their stereotyped methods will never help spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Therefore, what we are doing is perfect by the grace of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, for it is He who proposed to invent a way to capture those who strayed from Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 37

*aparādha kṣamāila, ḍubila prema-jale
kebā eḍāibe prabhura prema-mahājale*

TRANSLATION

Lord Caitanya excused them all, and they merged into the ocean of devotional service, for no one can escape the unique loving network of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

PURPORT

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was an ideal *ācārya*. An *ācārya* is an ideal teacher who knows the purport of the revealed scriptures, behaves exactly according to their injunctions and teaches his students to adopt these principles also. As an ideal *ācārya*, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu devised ways to capture all kinds of atheists and materialists. Every *ācārya* has a specific means of propagating his spiritual movement with the aim of bringing men to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. **Therefore, the method of one *ācārya* may be different from that of another, but the ultimate goal is never neglected.** Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī recommends:

*tasmāt kenāpy upāyena manaḥ kṛṣṇe niveśayet
sarve vidhi-nisedhāḥ syuretayorevakiṅkarāḥ*
[SB 7.1.32]

An *ācārya* should devise a means by which people may somehow or other come to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. First they should become Kṛṣṇa conscious, and all the prescribed rules and regulations may later gradually be introduced. **In our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement we follow this policy of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. For example, since boys and girls in the Western countries freely intermingle, special concessions regarding their customs and habits are necessary to bring them to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The *ācārya* must devise a means to bring them to devotional service. Therefore, although I am a *sannyāsī*. I sometimes take part in getting boys and girls married, although in the history of *sannyāsa* no *sannyāsī* has personally taken part in marrying his disciples.**

TEXT 38

sabā nistārite prabhu kṛpā-avatāra
sabā nistārite kare cāturī apāra

TRANSLATION

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu appeared in order to deliver all the fallen souls. Therefore He devised many methods to liberate them from the clutches of *māyā*.

PURPORT

It is the concern of the *ācārya* to show mercy to the fallen souls. In this connection, *deśa-kāla-pātra* (the place, the time and the object) should be taken into consideration. Since the European and American boys and girls in our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement preach together, less intelligent men criticize that they are mingling without restriction. In Europe and America boys and girls mingle unrestrictedly and have equal rights; therefore it is not possible to completely separate the men from the women. However, we are thoroughly instructing both men and women how to preach, and actually they are preaching wonderfully. Of course, we very strictly prohibit illicit sex. Boys and girls who are not married are not allowed to sleep together or live together, and there are separate arrangements for boys and girls in every temple. *Gṛhasthas* live outside the temple, for in the temple we do not allow even husband and wife to live together. **The results of this are wonderful. Both men and women are preaching the gospel of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Lord Kṛṣṇa with redoubled strength.** In this verse the words *sabā nistārite kare cāturī apāra* indicate that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu wanted to deliver one and all. **Therefore it is a principle that a preacher must strictly follow the rules and regulations laid down in the śāstras yet at the same time devise a means by which the preaching work to reclaim the fallen may go on with full force.**

>>> Ref. VedaBase =>Adi 7.38

Note: Now, we can change the interpretation of these purports to pro-FDG to anti-FDG (i.e. from their stand to our stand) by quoting the following two statements from the above quoted excerpts:

- 1) "But these rascals should consider that one cannot suddenly change a community's social customs."
- 2) "Therefore, although I am a *sannyāsī*. I sometimes take part in getting boys and girls married, although in the history of *sannyāsa* no *sannyāsī* has personally taken part in marrying his disciples."

So, in the first sentence, we can see how SP wanted to change the non-Vedic western social customs of his American disciples and bring them to the level of purely Vedic *varṇāśrama dharma*, but gradually. **Therefore, the antagonists i.e. FDG supporters lose their argument that SP wanted to overrule *varṇāśrama* and merely focus on preaching only.*** In the above statement of SP, a hidden desire/mood of SP is clearly seen that even though during the time when he wrote these statements (in early 70's or late 60's), it would have been too early to change the westernized habits of his disciples, but that eventually he wanted his western disciples to come to the level of strict observance of *varṇāśrama*. If even now that time has not come, then when will it come? Also, during, Jāhnavā Mātā's time, Gauḍīya line had no attachment for strict observance of *varṇāśrama dharma*; it was only after SBSST's revolutionary re-establishment of Gauḍīya Sampradāya. **So, we have to follow SBSST and not Jāhnavā Mātā. Whichever is later is stronger even according to the famous Mimāṃsā rule.**

*A speculative objection raised by some different type of antagonists (non-pro-FDG) – We disagree that this sentence implies that SP wanted to change the non-Vedic Western social customs. SP is merely stating a widely accepted fact. Furthermore, if the women who are as good as their brothers are delivering wonderful results, why cannot those wonderful results continue to roll along as they have been doing?

We do not know when SP actually dictated this statement, but we are inclined to believe that SP at the beginning of his mission in America really did think at first that the Holy Names and direct *Kṛṣṇa-bhakti* would be sufficient to generally help his disciples along the path to *Kṛṣṇa-prema* and that *varṇāśrama* would mostly be unnecessary. But after some time of seeing the difficulties they were having, he changed his approach and put more emphasis on *varṇāśrama* than he previously had.

So we, the "antagonists" who use this as proof for their point of view, are not entirely wrong. We have a point in that if *Kṛṣṇa-bhakti* sans *varṇāśrama* is keeping devotees sufficiently pure to make nice advancement, then there is no need for *varṇāśrama*. That is how we are reading this sentence. But what if things are not rolling along as nicely as suggested by SP's statement? What if the "brothers" and "sisters" are too inclined to do "unbrotherly and unsisterly" things together? That is when SP revisited his former strategy and then changed tack.

Our point still remains that there is a significant difference in how SP went about implementing *varṇāśrama* in the early part of his mission and then in the later part of his mission. That difference matters because it speaks to how SP likely thought *varṇāśrama* would be established.

In the early part of ISKCON, *saṅkīrtana* and *arcana* were emphasized but *varṇāśrama* was not. And devotees back then presumed that devotees as they became purified would naturally adopt *varṇāśrama* principles. On the basis of SP's utterances in his purport to CC Adi 7.31-32 that can be inferred. Indeed, if we speak with most pro-FDG devotees, they think that this is how *varṇāśrama* will be adopted. Since they (i.e. pro-FDG antagonists) believe it will come automatically, they see no reason to cultivate it.

But when SP later saw that his disciples were faltering under even that combination of direct *bhakti*, he then placed a strong emphasis on *varṇāśrama*. Indeed, we know empirically that 70% of SP's lectures on *varṇāśrama* occurred in the last two years of his life.

In relation to Haṁsadūta's letter, SP's expressed belief that his daughters along with his sons would initiate is consonant with the observation that SP placed little emphasis on *varṇāśrama* in the early part of his mission.

So on the basis of this two-fold division of the character of SP's Western mission, we too recommend an account of SP's instructions that are consonant with both phases (i.e. we too support the direct way of interpreting SP's letter to Haṁsadūta). Your explanation in your fifth section is not consonant with the character of the first phase of SP's mission in which *varṇāśrama* was not emphasized much, and it is also not consonant with SP's generally plain, straight-forward manner of speaking. As we have already pointed out, from the grammatical point of view women are explicitly included in his statement of who can give initiation, so they cannot be excluded. SP was also cognizant of women like Gangāmātā Gosvāminī who indeed gave initiation. Why couldn't he also produce some daughters who would be as exalted?

Clarification on a speculative objection raised by some different type of antagonists (they too are anti-FDG): Actually, we cannot accept that SP did not want to change the western behavioural pattern of his western disciples. He wanted to change it and therefore he has said that statement. Otherwise, the statement will become irrelevant. He is not merely stating a widely stated fact, but also his wish and we should remember that his statement is found in a purport to C.C. He wanted everyone to come to the level of pure *varṇāśrama*. To say that SP did not have any idea or wish to implement *daiva-varṇāśrama-dharma* in the early days and that only in the latter days he all of a sudden remembered *varṇāśrama* (this is variant antagonists' opinion) - is a faulty notion. Why? Because, from the very starting days of SBSST's (SP's guru's) mission, the objective was very clear. Actually, BVT had given SBSST a final letter (sometime in 1913 or 1914) containing his (BVT's) wish in which he instructed SBSST to have only two goals in the life. * First goal was the propagation of *saṅkīrtana* movement (that includes all sorts of preaching activities or *bṛhat-mṛdaṅga*) and second goal was to establish *daiva-varṇāśrama-dharma*. In order to fulfil these two desires of BVT, SBSST formally started his mission in 1918. So, how can it be accepted that our SP (who was disciple of SBSST and who knew the two missionary goals of his Guru Mahārāja) did not have any idea or clue to implement *varṇāśrama* in the beginning days and that he started remember about *varṇāśrama* sometime after 1975 AD. To say so would be erroneous. We have to presume that our SP knew that i) women are not allowed to initiate even when he wrote letter to Hamsadūta in 1969 and not that he got to know this fact only when he was writing purport to SB 4.12.32 in 1974 and ii) that the goals of his (SP's) newly found preaching mission (i.e. ISKCON) were ditto the two goals of his guru i.e. the establishment of *daiva-varṇāśrama* and *bṛhat-mṛdaṅga*. If we analyse SP's instructions overlooking these to presumptions about him, we are bound to commit errors either on subtle or gross level whether directly or indirectly.

The following is a letter written by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī:

Sarasvatī!

People of this world who are proud of their own aristocratic birth attack the pure *vaiṣṇava*... Thus they commit offences. **The solution to the problem is to establish the order of *daiva-varṇāśrama-dharma* – something which you have started doing; you should know that to be the real service to the Vaiṣṇava.** Because pure devotional conclusions are not being preached, all kinds of superstition and bad concepts are being called devotion by such pseudo *sampradāyas* as *sahajiyā* and *ativādī*.

Please always crush these anti-devotional concepts by preaching pure devotional conclusion and by setting an example... Please try very hard to make sure that the service to Śrī Māyāpurā will become a permanent thing. The real service to Śrī Māyāpurā can be done by acquiring printing presses, distributing devotional books, and *saṅkīrtana* - preaching. Please do not neglect to serve Śrī Māyāpura or to preach for the sake of your own reclusive *bhajana*. When I am not present any more, please take care to serve Śrī Māyāpura Dhāma which is so dear to you. This is my special instruction to you.

I had a special desire to preach the significance of such books as Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Ṣaṭ-Sandarbha, and Vedānta Darśana. You have to accept that responsibility. Śrī Māyāpura will prosper if you will establish an educational institution there. Never make any effort to collect knowledge or money for your own enjoyment. Only to serve Lord will you collect these things.

signed by Kedāranātha Datta Bhaktivinoda

We have to presume about SP's mood in such a way because such *ācāryas* are *sarvajñas* or all-knowers. They don't come to know anything at some particular time. They are eternally liberated personalities. Therefore, we have to presume that they know everything from the very beginning, though they might change their wishes at any time. But, we don't think that SP will make such a blunder as to wish to allow females as *dīkṣā gurus* even after knowing that they cannot act in that capacity (FDG cannot bestow a sacred thread as per the post-SBSST styled initiations). Also, I think that the reason why SP said that my disciples will be allowed to initiate by 1975 is because in 1969 he might have considered about his mortal demise to be happening sometime in 1975, but actually it happened in 1977 due to Kṛṣṇa's inconceivable ultimate wish (sometimes Kṛṣṇa's wish is not known to his pure devotees also due to the special arrangement of *yoga-māyā*). Otherwise, how can the same SP who had proclaimed many times that disciples cannot become guru before guru's demise, will start thinking that in 1975 when he is still living, his disciples will become gurus? Therefore, we have to presume many things about the *siddha-ācāryas'* moods through *arthāpatti-nyāya*. *Śrutārthāpatti* means the presumption based on facts to solve the mystery. But such presumption should be based on facts. Jīva Gosvāmī uses this same strategy many times in his *Sandarbhās*.

Since, the variant antagonists' straightforward interpretation of SP's letter to Haṁsadūta does undermine the applicability of the *varṇāśrama* concept in the early days of ISKCON mission, we have serious discords with them. They quote from C.C. 1.7.31-32 to substantiate their point citing Mahāprabhu's precedent, that in the early days of the mission, SP also wanted to presume that if *bhakti* is followed properly, *varṇāśrama dharma* will come by default. And thus, according to them, SP did not want to emphasize *varṇāśrama* too much in his early days. But, Mahāprabhu's example cannot be applied in this context. Why? During Mahāprabhu's time in India, practically every member of the four *varṇas* and *āśramas* were following their prescribed duties and Mahāprabhu's associates for sure and this can be inferred by studying the verses C.C. 3.4.129-133 and C.C. 3.3.45. What was lacking in the general masses is the concept of pure devotional service that is especially on the plane of *rāgānugā-bhakti*. Mahāprabhu undertook *sannyāsa* just to make the common people respect Him and thus heed to His teachings. In the early days of SP's preaching mission, the whole atmosphere was totally different from Mahāprabhu's time and place of preaching; Mahāprabhu appeared in the 15th century India, whereas, SP had to deal in 20th century America. SP was preaching in such a place (in western worlds) where there was no adherence to *varṇāśrama-dharma*, what to speak of pure *bhakti*. And similarly, during SBSST's time also, Indians had stopped following the *varṇāśrama dharma* due to the growing western/British influence in India at the time. Also, the *varṇāśrama dharma* they were following was based on the seminal birthright concept i.e. *jaḍa varṇāśrama*. Hence, to reinstate the *daiva varṇāśrama*, SBSST was ordered by BVT to have two distinct goals i.e. to spread *bhakti* and to reinforce *daiva-varṇāśrama*. Actually, the verses C.C. 1.7.31-32 and its purport only highlight the point that CM did not require undergoing *varṇāśrama dharma* (because CM is Bhagavān); these verses do not proclaim that the common masses of devotees also don't need to follow *varṇāśrama* esp. when they are on the level of *sādhana-bhakti*. Just for the propagation of *bhakti*, Mahāprabhu undertook *varṇāśrama dharma* i.e. *sannyāsa*. Whereas, conditioned *jīvas* like us don't take to *varṇāśrama* only to distribute *bhakti* to others i.e. as opposed to what CM did. We undertake *varṇāśrama* primarily to execute *sādhana bhakti* in a systematic way. We also concede that *varṇāśrama dharma* in itself is nothing, if it is not taken as favourable to *bhakti*. But, we should understand that *bhakti* cannot be performed properly by the devotees on the level of *sādhana-bhakti* (we are not talking about *siddha-bhaktas* and what to speak of C.M. - He is Bhagavān) as long as they do not follow *varṇāśrama dharma*. Without the implementation of *varṇāśrama dharma*, *bhakti* becomes *sahajiyā-vāda*. They are the *sahajiyās* who do not advocate the concept of following *varṇāśrama* at any stage of devotion. Rather, till the rise of *bhāva-bhakti*, one has to abide strictly by the laws of *varṇāśrama* and one cannot say that he will follow *varṇāśrama* only 20%

or 50% etc. i.e. he will follow *varṇāśrama* only 20% because only 20% implementation of *varṇāśrama* is favourable to *bhakti* and exceeding that limit will cause harm to devotion. Such views are not to be respected by genuine *bhaktas*. Actually speaking, it is *jaḍa-varṇāśrama* which has any conflict with the performance of *sādhana-bhakti*. *Daiva-varṇāśrama* never has any sort of conflict with the performance of *sādhana-bhakti*. It is fully harmonious and hence it is called "*daiva*" *varṇāśrama*.. Therefore, the notion of following *varṇāśrama* only in that percentage which remains conducive for the practice of *bhakti*, is rejected. *Daiva-varṇāśrama* has to be followed 100 % without any doubt because it is fully harmonious to devotion. Now, CM was Bhagavān and therefore He was not required to follow any type of *varṇāśrama*. How can we take His example to prove SP's mood regarding *varṇāśrama* in the early days of ISKCON.? Were all the western *jīvas* on the level of Mahāprabhu or even on the level of the *jīvātmās* to whom Mahāprabhu was preaching so that SP did not felt the requirement of *varṇāśrama* to be emphasized in the early days of his mission? Certainly not! S.P. knew the weaknesses of the western culture from the very point he stepped his foot on American soil. Even previously (when he was in India), he knew about the weaknesses of western culture, since he had grown up in the British dominated India and had taken education within the British operated schools. Conclusively, it is established that SP wanted to strengthen *varṇāśrama dharma* from the very beginning of his preaching in U.S.A., but started slowly emphasizing on it due to the consideration of his new disciples who had grown up in such non-Vedic culture and that it was not easy for them to immediately follow *varṇāśrama dharma* 100% and not because that if his disciples become rectified and elevated by the practice of *sādhana-bhakti*, there will remain no need for SP's introducing *varṇāśrama*. As stated earlier, real *sādhana bhakti* cannot be executed by first following *daiva-varṇāśrama*. Thus the variant antagonists' interpretation of SP's stand pertaining to *varṇāśrama dharma* during early days of ISKCON stands faulty. Hence, SP gradually started implementing *varṇāśrama* by first emphasizing the four regulative principles and then other things later on. Because, just as the *daiva-varṇāśrama* lays the foundation for *sādhana bhakti* (in normal cases and not in certain exceptional cases), *daiva-varṇāśrama*'s foundation is laid by abiding to the four regulative principles. Both SP and SBSST knew from the very beginning days of their preaching mission that the establishment of *daiva-varṇāśrama* is a distinct goal along with the goal of establishing *bhakti*. Thus, the promulgating contention (this is their argument) that the enforcement of *daiva-varṇāśrama-dharma* was done by SP only when he realized that *sādhana-bhakti* was not able to uplift the spiritual standard of his disciples, stands faulty. Because, even to think as such within one's mind invites offense unto the lotus feet of Bhakti Mahārānī. To say that Bhakti Mahārānī i.e. *sādhana bhakti* is not able to purify the *jīvas* and therefore, the *varṇāśrama* is needed - is a totally offensive statement. After all, *varṇāśrama* is not part of *svarūpa-siddhā-bhakti* i.e. *sādhana-bhakti*. It is rather required to create a background for *sādhana-bhakti*. Just as the body is needed to execute *sādhana-bhakti*, so also, DVAD is needed. Such a facilitating structure does not make the gross body and DVAD as superior to *svarūpa-siddhā-bhakti*. Only that *sādhana-bhakti* which is done systematically becoming fixed in the structure of *daiva-varṇāśrama*, is able to produce *anartha-nivṛtti* and other fruits. Without becoming fixed in the structure of DVAD, *sādhana-bhakti* has to go lot of turbulence.

Varṇāśrama cannot be treated as an appendix of *sādhana-bhakti* either. Therefore, even the *antyajas* or outcastes are immediately promoted to the platform of a *brāhmaṇa* (i.e. *varṇāśrama*) and even more than that, once they embrace pure devotion to Hari as the *śāstras* have proclaimed. This means that the outcastes simultaneously start following the *varṇāśrama-dharma* along with *sādhana-bhakti*, and because they are no more to be considered outcastes, they are permitted to follow DVAD. In ISKCON also, once someone becomes initiated, he/she has to start following *varṇāśrama* till the rise of *bhāva-bhakti*. So, to consider that only when *sādhana-bhakti* will fail, the *varṇāśrama* shall be implemented as a supplementary appendix, is wrong. Rather, as soon as one enters onto the path of *bhakti*, one becomes promoted to the *brāhminical* status and is thus required to uphold that status by following

VAD along with *bhakti*. However, it should also be noted that *bhakti* is not assisted by DVAD. *Bhakti* does not need any assistance from any other *sādhana*. But, rather that *bhakti* can be performed favourably (till the rise of *bhāva-bhakti*) only by *varṇāśrama*. To have a favourable atmosphere for the implementation of *sādhana-bhakti* is the target of DVAD. And DVAD 100% certainly produces favourable atmosphere for *sādhana-bhakti*. Hence DVAD cannot ever be rejected. And so, DVAD merely creates a favourable atmosphere for *bhakti*'s discharge and therefore, it cannot be considered an assistant of *bhakti* as would have been the case with other parallel *sādhana*s like *jñāna-kāṇḍa*, *phalgu-vairāgya*, *nirīśvara-sāṅkhya*, *aṣṭāṅga-yoga*, and *karma-kāṇḍa* etc. Just as, the commentators like SBSST consider that the control of six urges as regulated in N.O.I Verse 1 is not directly part of *bhakti* but are preparing qualifications to perform the *sādhana-bhakti* in a favourable way. However, it should also not be considered that the control of these six urges means that they are assistants of Bhakti Mahārānī. No other *sādhana* except *bhakti* can assist itself. All such siddhanta has been propounded by Jīva Gosvāmī in his *sandarbhāṣa*. VCT and BDVB (i.e. Viśvanātha Cakravartī & Baladeva Vidābhūṣaṇa) also affirm the same.

Regarding the second sentence (quoted, numbered by us and taken as an excerpt from the purport to C.C. 1.7.37 above on Page 20th of this appendix), SP is making it clear (i.e. by the saying that no *sannyāsī* in the historical past has performed *yajñas* or touched fire and marriage ceremony) that only in exceptional circumstances, the strict observance of the *varṇāśrama* norms be broken for the sake of preaching. Since during early days of ISKCON, SP was the only person knowing the methods of *yajña* and marriage, he had to forcibly do so in order to initiate and marry his disciples, though his *sannyāsa-dharma* (i.e. *varṇāśrama dharma*) was creating a hindrance. It is also implied by SP here, that such exceptional acts should not be continued to be performed, when the compulsive situation exists no more. Therefore, even practically, we saw that after the early days of ISKCON were over, SP entrusted the duty of the performance of fire sacrifice and marriage ceremony to his male disciples who were personally trained by him in this ritualistic acts. **Conclusion is, in no way, is SP's statements are supporting the idea of FDG; there is no such compulsive situation to allow FDGs to operate in ISKCON, because, the past 35 years of tremendous growth (post-1977) that ISKCON has seen in all continents {during SP's time, there were only 108 temples in 12 years of his mortal presence; whereas, now we have more than 950 centres (i.e. almost 8 to 9 times more) within past 35 years post-1977. So, ISKCON developed almost 850 centres more than in comparison to the 108's ratio during SP's mortal presence. Off course, this all happened due to SP's grace, without any doubt.}, did not happen due to FDGs (we don't have FDG's so far), but due to MDGs who were empowered by SP. Therefore, that which is exceptional cannot be imitated during normal circumstances.**

8) Social position of Jāhnavā Mātā during Jīva Gosvāmī's time.

Factually speaking, it was Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmīpāda who was the officially declared pontiff/head/supremo of the Gauḍīya Sampradāya during the time of Śrīmatī Jāhnavā Thākuraṇī. Kindly refer to the Caitanya-caritāmṛta 1.10.85 Purport's following statements:

1) "After the disappearance of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Sanātana Gosvāmī in Vṛndāvana, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī became the *ācārya* of all the *Vaiṣṇavas* in Bengāl, Orissā and the rest of the world, and it is he who used to guide them in their devotional service."

(Ādi 10.85)

2) "While Jīva Gosvāmī was alive, Śrīmatī Jāhnavādevī, the pleasure potency of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, went to Vṛndāvana with a few devotees. Jīva Gosvāmī was very kind to the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas, the *Vaiṣṇavas* from Bengāl. Whoever went to Vṛndāvana he provided with a residence and *prasādam*." (Adi 10.85)

The above quoted excerpt from Śrīla Prabhupāda's purport proves that Jāhnavā Thākuraṇī was officially holding no status in the Gauḍīya Sampradāya and that it was only Jīva Gosvāmī who was the supremo of this lineage in all the three places viz., Puri, Navadvīpa, and Vraja, nay in the whole world. **Therefore, a woman can never be officially declared as a leader, irrespective of which *varṇa* she belongs to, i.e. *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya*, etc.**

9) In ISKCON, the second initiated female devotees are not to be considered full *brāhmaṇas*.

The following verses of Haribhaktivilāsa 2.3-4 and Bhakti-sandarbhā 283 found quoted in the Bhaktivedānta Purport to C.C. 2.15.108, as reproduced below substantiate this theme:

*"dvijānāmanupetānām/ sva-karmādhyayanādīsu
yathādhikaronāstīha/ syāccopanayanādanu*

*tathātrādīkṣitānāmtu/ mantra-devārcanādīṣu
nādhikaro 'sty ataḥkuryād/ ātmānamśiva-saṁstutam*

Even though born in a *brāhmaṇa* family, one cannot engage in Vedic rituals without being initiated and having a sacred thread. Although born in a *brāhmaṇa* family, one becomes a *brāhmaṇa* after initiation and the sacred thread ceremony. Unless one is initiated as a *brāhmaṇa*, he cannot worship the holy name properly."

>>> Ref. VedaBase => SMD 5.2: The Necessity and Purpose of Initiation.

Comments by RKD:

I) Therefore, the notion marking a sacred thread as a mere add on or a supplementary non-significant item to the initiation turns out to be a complete lie. **This is because SP has translated those verses as ".....without being initiated and having a sacred thread.....after initiation and the sacred thread ceremony.....".**

II) This proves that *upanayanam-saṁskāra* is an integral part of the overall initiation procedure. **This also proves that without holding a sacred thread, one cannot be considered to be a full *brāhmaṇa*.**

III) This also validates that the sacred thread ceremony was not merely advocated and introduced by SBSST to establish the level of *pāñcarātriya-vaiṣṇavas* on the *brāhminical* level, but that it also had a spiritually and devotionally esoteric purpose to be served and that is evident in the quoted passage above as ".....unless one is initiated as a *brāhmaṇa* – unquote (which implies having a sacred thread also) unquote – he cannot worship the holy name properly". **Therefore, SBSST's introduction of the *upanayanam-saṁskāra* was also for a higher devotional purpose and not only for social classification of *pāñcarātriya-vaiṣṇavas* as *brāhmaṇas*.**

IV) This also substantiates that since women cannot have a sacred thread by default as per the tradition, and since SP only uses the masculine pronoun 'he' while translating the above verses, **women are not to be considered full *brāhmaṇas***. Hence, women are not allowed to worship deity or perform any ritual in public places like temples etc.

Another substantiation proving the *upanayanam-saṁskāra* or sacred thread ceremony as a vital process of spiritual path is found in C.C. 1.1.46's Bhaktivedānta Purport, as reproduced below:

"The initiation ceremony is called *upanīti*, the function that brings one nearer to the spiritual master. A bona fide spiritual master accepts charge of disciples, teaches them the Vedic knowledge with all its intricacies, and gives them their second birth. The ceremony performed to initiate a disciple into the study of spiritual science is called *upanīti*, or the function that brings one nearer to the spiritual master. One who cannot be brought nearer to a spiritual master cannot have a sacred thread, and thus he is indicated to be a *śūdra*."

>>> Ref. VedaBase => SMD 5.2: The Necessity and Purpose of Initiation:

Comments by RKD:I) Here, the term '*upanīti*' has been twice used by SP to indicate '*upanayanam-saṁskāra*', because the Sanskrit meaning of both terms i.e. '*upanīti*' and '*upanayanam*' is the same. Grammatically speaking, '*upa*' is an *upasarga* or a prefix, whereas '*nīti*' and '*nayanam*' are the actual nouns originally derived from the same verbal root or *dhātu* known as '*nay*'. '*Upa*' means 'nearer'. '*Nay*' means 'to bring' and '*nīti*' as well as '*nayanam*' mean 'the process of being brought'. So, both '*upanīti*' and '*upanayanam*' mean 'to bring nearer'. **Therefore, both the terms are synonymous without any doubt.**

II) Now, since SP is talking about the *upanayanam-saṁskāra* or the sacred thread ceremony, when SP identifies '*upanīti*' as completely non-different from initiation ceremony (in the above quoted passage), it is automatically proved that *upanayanam* is not a social or *smārta-saṁskāra* as what some new generation of Gauḍīya Math devotees erroneously call it. If the allotment of *brahma-gāyatrī* and sacred thread are to be considered part of *upanayanam-saṁskāra*, then it cannot be called a *smārta-saṁskāra* because Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmīpāda has written a small booklet expounding the esoteric exposition on the *brahma-gāyatrī mantra* based on Agni-Purāṇa; in that booklet known as '*Gāyatrī-vyākhyā-vivṛttiḥ*', Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī proves that the meanings of both the *brahma-gāyatrī* and the *kāma-gāyatrī* are one and the same and also that *brahma-gāyatrī* cannot be interpreted otherwise as what the *pañcopāsaka-smārtas* mistakenly do. **If so established by Jīva Gosvāmī, how can it be considered that the allotment of *brahma-gāyatrī* along with the sacred thread i.e. the whole *upanayanam-saṁskāra* – is a *smārta* ritual? Certainly not. Rather, it is purely a *rāgānuga-vaiṣṇava* ritual.**

III) Till now it is proved that SP is identifying (i.e. equalizing) '*upanīti*' or '*upanayanam*' with the spiritual initiation ceremony or the *vaiṣṇavādikṣā*. Moving ahead, we find that SP (in the above quoted passage) is considering this '*upanīti*' to be the same as 'the function that brings one nearer to the spiritual master'. Now, if the '*upanayanam-saṁskāra*' was a *smārta* ritual, then such a ritual can never bring a *vaiṣṇavasādhaka* nearer to the spiritual master i.e. *vaiṣṇava guru* or the *pāramārthika guru* (and not the *vyāvahārika-kula guru*) - as how Jīva Gosvāmī labels it in Bhakti Sandarbha Para. 210 viz., "***paramārtha-gurvāśrayo vyāvahārika-gurvādi-parityāgenāpi-kartavyaḥ***". Therefore, SP is clearly indicating the non-distinction between the '***adau-guru-pādāśrayaḥ***' or 'taking shelter of the lotus feet of a bona fide spiritual master' (which is the first limb among the 64 limbs of devotional service as enumerated in

B.R.S. verse 1.2.4 viz., “***guru-pādāśrayastasmād.....etc.***”) and this *upanayanam-saṁskāra*. If we read the long introduction of SBSST given to Satkriyāsāradīpikā, we will find that SBSST has clearly stated that originally, only *vaiṣṇava-dharma* existed but that later on, the *smārta* influence started to take shape; if so, then it is also proved that originally, this *upanayanam-saṁskāra* belonged to the *vaiṣṇavas* only and that later on the *smārtas* adopted it. This interpretation is also harmonious with the *gauḍīya* conception stating *ekāyana-vaiṣṇava-śākhā* to be the most original form of Vedas. If *upanayanam* was intended to be given by a *vyāvahārika-kula guru*, then SP would not have referred to that *upanīti* as an activity which bring disciple nearer to spiritual master, since the *vyāvahārika guru* can never be called spiritual master. Only a *pāramārthika guru* can be labelled as such. **Hence, *upanayanam-saṁskāra* (along with the *pāñcarātrik* mantras) is the first limb of *sādhana-bhakti*. It is also proven by this analysis that though the current form of second initiation in ISKCON is a combination of ‘*upanīti*’ and the ‘*pāñcarātrik*’ methods, still, both of them are to be known as ‘*vaiṣṇava-dīkṣā*’.** Philosophically speaking, *upanayanam* is also a part of *vaiṣṇava-dīkṣā* just as the *pāñcarātrik* method is, though this might not have remained a standard practice in the pre-SBSST *gauḍīya* line. It is not that *upanayanam* has become part of *vaiṣṇava-dīkṣā* only after SBSST formally combined them together. SP also reaffirms in the last part of the quoted passage that “the ceremony performed to initiate a disciple into the study of spiritual science is called ‘*upanīti*’ and that spiritual science is the Vedic knowledge. We know that the main purpose of the *upanayanam-saṁskāra* is to give eligibility to enter into the Vedic knowledge. So, clearly, SP is indicating *upanayanam* by the term *upanīti*.

IV) “One who cannot be brought nearer to a spiritual master cannot have a sacred thread, and thus he is indicated to be a *śūdra*.” – By this statement SP has clearly demonstrated that those who don’t have a sacred thread cannot be rightfully called *dvija* or *brāhmaṇa* and are to be placed in the category of *śūdras*. Now, if we look at the following statement from the SB 1.4.25’s purport, we will find that SP has denied the *śūdras* and women the rights of sacred thread.

“The *dvija-bandhus* are classified with the *śūdras* and the woman class, who are by nature less intelligent. The *śūdras* and the woman class do not have to undergo any *saṁskāra* save and except the ceremony of marriage.”

>>> Ref. VedaBase => SB 1.4.25

Now, in the case of ISKCON women who are given second initiation, they have certainly been brought nearer to their spiritual masters, but because they lack the sacred thread, they cannot be accepted as full *dvijas* or *brāhmaṇas*. At the same time, they are also not to be classified with the *śūdra* and *dvija-bandhu* category.

10) Women are never allotted equal rights in Vedic culture, are subordinate to men, and are bound to follow *śtrī-dharma* unconditionally (Preaching is not so essential for them).

**I. *strīṇāṁ ca pati-devānāṁ tac-chuśrūṣānukūlatā /*
*tad-bandhuṣv anuvṛttis ca nityam tad-vrata-dhāraṇam //***

SYNONYMS

strīṇām -- of women; *ca* -- also; *pati-devānām* -- who have accepted their husbands as worshipable; *tat-śuśrūṣā* -- readiness to render service to her husband; *anukūlatā* -- being favourably disposed towards her husband; *tat-bandhuṣu* -- unto the friends and relatives of the husband; *anuvrttiḥ* -- being similarly disposed (to treat them well for the satisfaction of the husband); *ca* -- and; *nityam* -- regularly; *tat-vrata-dhāraṇam* -- accepting the vows of the husband or acting exactly as the husband acts.

TRANSLATION

To render service to the husband, to be always favourably disposed toward the husband, to be equally well disposed toward the husband's relatives and friends, and to follow the vows of the husband -- these are the four principles to be followed by women described as chaste.

PURPORT

It is very important for peaceful householder life that a woman follow the vow of her husband. Any disagreement with the husband's vow will disrupt family life. In this regard, Cāṇakya Paṇḍita gives a very valuable instruction: ***dampatyoh kalaho nāsti tatra śrīḥ svayam āgataḥ***. When there are no fights between husband and wife, the goddess of fortune automatically comes to the home. A woman's education should be conducted along the lines indicated in this verse. The basic principle for a chaste woman is to be always favourably disposed toward her husband. In Bhagavad-gītā (1.40) it is said, ***strīṣu duṣṭāsu vārṣneya jāyate varṇa-saṅkaraḥ***: if the women are polluted, there will be *varṇa-saṅkara* population. In modern terms, the *varṇa-saṅkara* are the hippies, who do not follow any regulative injunctions. Another explanation is that when the population is *varṇa-saṅkara*, no one can know who is on what platform. The *varṇāśrama* system scientifically divides society into four *varṇas* and four *āśramas*, but in *varṇa-saṅkara* society there are no such distinctions, and no one can know who is who. In such a society, no one can distinguish between a *brāhmaṇa*, a *kṣatriya*, a *vaiśya* and a *śūdra*. For peace and happiness in the material world, the *varṇāśrama* institution must be introduced. The symptoms of one's activities must be defined, and one must be educated accordingly. Then spiritual advancement will automatically be possible.

>>> Ref. VedaBase => SB 7.11.25

II. "Just like our women, Kṛṣṇa conscious, they are working. **They don't want equal rights with men. It is due to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.** They are cleansing the temple, they are cooking very nicely. They are satisfied. **They never say that "I have to go to Japan for preaching like Prabhupāda."** They never say. This is artificial. So Kṛṣṇa consciousness means work in his constitutional position. The women, men, when they remain in their constitutional position, there will be no artificial..." (Morning Walk -- May 27, 1974, Rome)

III. From Śrīla Prabhupāda's Purport to SB 10.4.5

"Devakī was the daughter of a *kṣatriya* and knew how to play the political game. In politics there are different methods of achieving success: first repression (*dāma*), then compromise (*sāma*), and then asking for a gift (*dāna*). Devakī first adopted the policy of repression by directly attacking Kāmsa for having cruelly, atrociously killed her babies. Then she compromised by saying that this was not his fault, and then she begged for a gift. **As we learn from the history of the Mahābhārata, or "Greater India," the wives and daughters of the ruling class, the kṣatriyas, knew the political game, but we never find that a woman was given the post of chief executive.** This is in accordance with the injunctions of Manu-saṁhitā, **but unfortunately Manu-saṁhitā is now being insulted, and the Āryans, the members of Vedic society, cannot do anything. Such is the nature of Kali-yuga.**"

IV. Letter to: Arundhatī

—

Amsterdam
30 July, 1972
72-07-30
Miami

My dear Arundhatī,

Please accept my blessings. I am in due receipt of your letter dated July 19, 1972, and I am simply surprised that you want to give up your child to some other persons, even they are also devotees. **For you, child-worship is more important than deity-worship. If you cannot spend time with him, then stop the duties of *pujārī*. At least you must take good care of your son until he is four years old, and if after that time you are unable any more to take care of him then I shall take care.** These children are given to us by Krishna, they are *Vaiṣṇavas* and we must be very careful to protect them. These are not ordinary children, they are *Vaikunṭha* children, and we are very fortunate we can give them chance to advance further in Krishna Consciousness. **That is very great responsibility, do not neglect it or be confused. Your duty is very clear.**

Hoping this will meet you in good health.

Your ever well-wisher,
A.C.BhaktivedāntaSwāmī
ACBS/sda

V. "A woman is not supposed to take *sannyāsa*. So-called spiritual societies concocted in modern times give *sannyāsa* even to women, although there is no sanction in the Vedic literature for a woman's accepting *sannyāsa*. ... **The woman must remain at home. She has only three stages of life: dependency on the father in childhood, dependency on the husband in youth and, in old age, dependency on the grown-up son...**" (From the purport to SB 3.24.40)

VI. Lecture on SB 3.28.18 -- Nairobi, October 27, 1975:

"So every devotee is subordinate. Nobody is equal to Kṛṣṇa. If we do that, then it is mistake. Devotee... A devotee never says. *Dāsa*. *Dāsa* means servant. Servant is always the subordinate. Therefore *Vaiṣṇava* says "*dāsa*." He never says "master." *Vaiṣṇava*, *dāsa*, subordinate, *tad-adhīna*, under the..., under Kṛṣṇa. Nobody can be superior to Kṛṣṇa or equal to Kṛṣṇa. That is mistake. These *Māyāvādī* philosophers, they think, "Now I have become equal to Kṛṣṇa. I am also Kṛṣṇa." That is rascaldom. Kṛṣṇa, God, is never equal to anyone. *Asamaurdhva*. *Asama* means "not equal," and *ūrdhva*, "always the top." *Asamaurdhva*. That is described in the Bhagavad... So we should remain *tad-adhīna*, always under Kṛṣṇa. That is our perfection. **If we remain just like in Western countries—they rebel. If a woman is advised to remain under the control of the husband, that is insult to them. They cannot tolerate it. But actually we see in India that a wife who remains under the guidance of the husband, she is happy. That's a practical fact. That is a practical fact. And therefore in the Manu-saṁhitā it is advised, *na striyaṁ svātantryaṁ arhati*. Women should be always protected.** That is... Protection does not mean negligence, no.

Protection means to give him (her) all facilities. That is protection. Just like father gives protection to the child... That does not mean neglecting. Similarly, a woman should be protected. It is not that neglecting. They misunderstand. In the Western countries maybe there is misbehavior, but actually we have seen, still going on in India, the woman is... That is the ideal given by Lord Rāmacandra, how woman is given protection by the husband. Sītādevī was kidnapped. Rāmacandra is the Supreme Lord. He could have married many thousands of Sītā, but as the dutiful husband, to rescue one wife He killed the whole family of Rāvaṇa. This is protection. He killed the whole family of him. He became... This is. So woman requires protection, and the husband is responsible to give protection, the father is responsible to give protection, and the elderly children, they are responsible to give protection."

VII. "Change your seat. Cover the head. Cover the head and give her this red. Cover it nicely. You see, here. You should keep your wife always covered. (laughter) Don't allow this miniskirt or minishirt. (laughter) According to Vedic civilization, respectable woman cannot be seen even by the sun. *Asūryam paśyat*. How can you avoid sun? But it is said like that. The sun will find difficulty to see one man's woman. Yes. *Asuryam pasyat*. *Asūryam*. *Sūrya* means the sun. Sun cannot. Sun will also hanker after her: "How can I see that woman?" (chuckles) So woman should be always in privacy. They should be respectfully protected by the husband and the father. That is the way. All right."

>>> Ref. VedaBase => Wedding Ceremony and SP's Lecture -- Boston, May 6, 1969

11) Bhakti and Daiva-varṇāśrama-dharma

Some *sahajiyās* within the institution are erroneously trying to establish the total rejection of *varṇāśrama-dharma* by quoting certain passages from C.C. 2.8. But, as analysed above, SP and SBSST wanted to put an equal emphasis on the implementation of *varṇāśrama-dharma* and *bhakti-yoga* keeping in mind the long-term future of their wide spectrum preaching mission. The introduction to Gītā-bhūṣaṇa-bhāṣya of Śrīpāda Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa shall be quoted for the factual depiction of the above listed subject.

“asyaśāstrasyaśraddhaluḥsaddharma-niṣṭhovijitendriyo ‘dhikārī. sacasaniṣṭha-pariniṣṭhita-nirapekṣa-bhedāttrividhaḥ. teṣusvargādi-lokānapididṛkṣurniṣṭhayāsva-dharmānharyarcana-rūpānācaranprathamah. loka-sañjighṛkṣayātānācaranhari-bhakti-niratodvitīyah. sacasacasāśramah. satya-tapo-japādibhiḥviśuddha-cittoharyeka-nirataḥṭṭṛtīyonirāśramah.”

Rendition

“One who has faith in this scripture (i.e. B.G.), who is steady in following the path of *dharma* (*varṇāśrama-dharma*) and has conquered the senses, is qualified for this scripture (*adhikārī*). There are three types of qualified persons. The first, called *saniṣṭha*, performs his prescribed duties (of *varṇa*) as a form of worship of Hari, with desire to see Svarga-loka. (The *saniṣṭha* devotee performs *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*, followed by *jñāna* and *aṣṭāṅga-yoga*; therefore, such a devotee cannot be considered to be following the path of *uttamā-svarūpa-siddhā-bhakti* devoid of any trace of *jñāna* and *karma*, as explained in B.R.S. 1.1.11. But, eventually he realizes the Lord. Therefore his desire to see Svarga-loka is for curiosity, to see the Lord's powers and not to enjoy. Those performing *sakāma-karma-miśrā-bhakti*, however, desire to enjoy Svarga.) The second type, called *pariniṣṭhita*, follows his prescribed duties (*varṇāśrama-dharma*) to set an example for others (i.e. required in preaching mission) and at the same time engages in *bhakti* to the Lord. These two types also follow the rules of their particular *āśrama*. The third type (this mostly applies to *bhajanānandī bhaktas* not required for

preaching mission), also called *nirapekṣa*, whose heart has been purified by austerities, *japa*, truthfulness and other actions, is absorbed only in worshipping Hari (performing only *bhakti*, not following *varṇa* duties). He does not follow the duties of any *āśrama* (it is implied here that such a devotee is on the stage of *paramahansa* who has transcended the level of *varṇāśrama*, and thus his ideal cannot be followed by devotees not on a *paramahansa* level).

12) A true *vaiṣṇava* follower of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu can never transgress her *adhikāra* or *maryādā* of *strī-dharma*.

Note (by RKDB) – By the usage of *upalakṣaṇa-nyāya* (i.e. the logic of indirect indication – This method has been used to include all nine limbs of *bhakti* while interpreting the celebrated verse of Nārādīya Purāṇa i.e. “*harer nāma harer nāma.....*” by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura.), the concept of the prohibition from a slight deviation of the standard etiquette and behaviour i.e. *maryādā-lanḡhana-niṣedha* is also applicable ditto for the *strī-dharma*. **Hence, the below produced passages from C.C. serve as the greatest *vidhi-vākya* for *strī-dharma*** following the logic of indirect indication used several times by our previous *ācāryas* as an integral part of the process of interpretation.

I. *prabhu-gaṇe yāñra dekhe alpa-maryādā-lanḡhana vākya-daṇḍa kari' kare maryādā sthāpana*

SYNONYMS

prabhu-gaṇe -- in the associates of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu; *yāñra* -- whose; *dekhe* -- sees; *alpa-maryādā-lanḡhana* -- a slight deviation from the standard etiquette and behaviour; *vākya-daṇḍa kari'* - chastising with words; *kare* -- does; *maryādā* -- etiquette; *sthāpana* -- establishing.

TRANSLATION

Dāmodara Paṇḍita would verbally chastise every devotee of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu whom he found deviating even slightly from proper behaviour. Thus he established the standard etiquette.

>>> Ref. VedaBase => Antya 3.45

II. TEXT 128

TEXT

śuni' mahāprabhu mane santoṣa pāila tuṣṭa hañā tāñre kichu kahite lāgilā

SYNONYMS

śuni' -- hearing; *mahāprabhu* -- Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu; *mane* -- in the mind; *santoṣa pāilā* -- became very happy; *tuṣṭa hañā* -- being pleased; *tāñre* -- unto him; *kichu* -- something; *kahite lāgilā* -- began to speak.

TRANSLATION

Having heard all these details, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, greatly pleased, spoke as follows.

Antya 4.129–130

TEXTS 129–130

TEXT

**"yadyapio tumi hao jagat-pāvana
tomā-sparśe pavitra haya deva-muni-gaṇa
tathāpi bhakta-svabhāva – maryādā-rakṣaṇa
maryādā-pālana haya sādhura bhūṣaṇa**

SYNONYMS

yadyapio -- although; *tumi* -- you; *hao* -- are; *jagat-pāvana* -- the deliverer of the entire universe; *tomā* -- you; *sparśe* -- by touching; *pavitra* -- purified; *haya* -- becomes; *deva-muni-gaṇa* -- the demigods and great saintly persons; *tathāpi* -- still; *bhakta-svabhāva* -- the nature of a devotee; ***maryādā*** -- etiquette; ***rakṣaṇa*** -- to protect or observe; ***maryādā pālana*** -- to maintain etiquette; *haya* -- is; *sādhura bhuṣaṇa* -- ornament of devotees.

TRANSLATION

"My dear Sanātana, although you are the deliverer of the entire universe and although even the demigods and great saints are purified by touching you, **it is the characteristic of a devotee to observe and protect the Vaiṣṇava etiquette. Maintenance of the Vaiṣṇava etiquette is the ornament of a devotee.**

Antya 4.131

TEXT 131

TEXT

**maryādā-laṅghane loka kare upahāsa
iha-loka, para-loka -- dui haya nāśa**

SYNONYMS

maryādā-laṅghane -- by surpassing the customs of etiquette; *loka* -- people; *kare upahāsa* -- joke; *ih-loka* -- this world; *para-loka* -- the next world; *dui* -- two; ***haya nāśa*** -- become vanquished.

TRANSLATION

"If one transgresses the laws of etiquette, people make fun of him, and **thus he is vanquished in both this world and the next.**

Antya 4.132

TEXT 132

TEXT

**maryādā rākhile, tuṣṭa kaile mora mana
tumi āiche na karile kare kon jana?"**

SYNONYMS

maryādā rākhile -- since you have observed the etiquette; *tuṣṭa kaile* -- you have satisfied; *mora mana* -- My mind; *tumi* -- you; *āiche* -- like that; *na karile* -- without doing; *kare* -- would do; *kon jana* -- who.

TRANSLATION

"**By observing the etiquette, you have satisfied My mind.** Who else but you could show this example?"

Antya 4.133

TEXT 133

TEXT

***eta bali' prabhu tñre ālingana kaila
tñra kanḍu-rasa prabhura śrī-aṅge lāgila***

SYNONYMS

eta bali' -- saying this; *prabhu* -- Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu; *tñre* -- him; '*ālingana kaila* -- embraced; *tñra* -- his; *kanḍu-rasa* -- moisture oozing from the itches; *prabhura* -- of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu; *śrī-ange lāgila* -- smeared the body.

TRANSLATION

After saying this, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu embraced Sanātana Gosvāmī, and the moisture oozing from the itching sores on Sanātana's body smeared the body of the Lord.

>>> Ref. VedaBase => Antya 4.128-133

13) Some grave shortcomings in the induction of FDG provision in the institution.

Hence, the sacred-thread ceremony or *upanayanam* of female devotees in ISKCON is not performed (i.e. only *vaiṣṇava-dīkṣā* mixed with the *brahma-gāyatrī* mantra is performed for them - as substantiated through proper reconciliation of different aspects in our above shown analysis) and therefore, if we accept the proposal of female *dīkṣā gurus* in ISKCON, it would mean that those FDG's are not eligible to give the sacred-thread to their male disciples, {the 'Śārādīyā's' and 'Vaikuṇṭhanātha's' case cannot be applied herein, because in that letter to Śārādīyā, SP at all doesn't mention that Śārādīyā should chant the gayatri mantras on the sacred thread, as is the prevalent custom in ISKCON, nor that she should personally make Vaikuṇṭhanātha wear that thread by her hands, since, SP had already chanted on the thread of Vaikuṇṭhanātha sent through the mail; and so, SP had only allowed Śārādīyā to once again chant the written *gāyatrī mantras* as found in that letter into the right ear of Vaikuṇṭhanātha just to complete the formality, and that also, only on the basis, that Śārādīyā had taken second initiation prior to Vaikuṇṭhanātha. Otherwise, in that letter, SP has not mentioned about any type of intervention in the matter of sacred thread to be done by Śārādīyā. A question arises as to why SP didn't allow Śārādīyā to intervene with the sacred thread? The answer is: How can one, who herself is not entitled to wear a sacred thread, and so, who doesn't possess a sacred thread, can bestow that thread onto another person i.e. even though acting as a proxy of SP? Therefore, we find that on the contrary, SP has allowed Śārādīyā to only act as his proxy in the matter of aurally chanting the *gāyatrī mantras*, since, she has received those mantras from SP; whereas, sacred thread, has not been received by her from SP, and therefore SP has indicated no signs of her interference in that context. This can also be understood by a common sense logic. Why a *grhastha-guru* is not entitled to give *sannyāsa* to an aspiring candidate? Because of the same logical reasons mentioned above. Since, a *grhastha-guru* himself is not a *sannyāsī*, therefore, he can't bestow *sannyāsa-āśrama* on the aspiring candidate. This has also been substantiated in the 33rd paragraph of *Saṁskāra-dīpikā* by Gopalabhaṭṭa Gosvāmī as thus: "*ataḥ svamata-samprāyi-sannyāsa-dharma-sādhya-sādhana-anuṣṭhāna-aprājñasya sannyāsa-dharma-grahaṇa-saṁskāra-aprājñatvāt grhī-guruṇā kṛtaḥ sannyāso nirastaḥ*". Simpler and concise rendition (done by the composer of the essay): "(Śrīla Gopala Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī is making an ironic/sarcastic remark within the context of

the *vaiṣṇava-sannyāsa-dīkṣā*) Since a house-holder i.e. *grhastha guru* is unaware of the experiences and laws governing the *sannyāsa* life, allotment of *sannyāsa* order by him, unto an aspiring *sannyāsa* candidate, has to be utterly rejected. How can a guru, who himself has not undertaken the vows of *sannyāsa*, be considered fit to bestow that *sannyāsa*?" In the same logical way, how can that FDG who has not been given the 'sacred thread', be allowed to bestow it upon her male disciple?} which will prove that the male disciples of those female gurus will have to resort to a male *dīkṣā guru* for obtaining the sacred thread separately. If so happens, then it will give a solid rise to two possibilities. And both of these possibilities will turn detrimental for ISKCON's *dīkṣā-siddhānta*. How? Let us analyse.

1st Possibility: If some FDG appoints another male *dīkṣā guru* or an 'MDG' to serve as a proxy for her in the matter of granting a sacred thread to her male disciple, than such an act on the part of that FDG, will be considered fully illegitimate and inappropriate, in the direct violation of norms and customs. Why? Because, as applying the same logic as shown above, the said FDG will not have any licit powers to appoint that 'MDG' as her proxy (for the bestowal of sacred thread), because she herself is bereft of the possession of a sacred thread. How can someone who herself doesn't possess a qualification (in this case, the term qualification means the possession of a sacred thread by an FDG), is able to give the power of attorney on that to another MDG proxy? Even in the legal matters found in the material world, we see that the power of attorney is granted by an original person to his/her proxy, only when that original person contains that particular power. In the case of an FDG initiating her male disciple into second initiation, such allotting powers of attorney (for the sake of the bestowal of sacred thread) are not present with the said FDG, because, she herself is lacking that power i.e. possession of sacred-thread. In the case of Śārādīyā, Śārādīyā was only given power of attorney to aurally chant the SP's written *gāyatrī mantras* for a second time into Vaikuṇṭhanātha's ear (as evident from the letter, she was not given the power to intervene on sacred thread due to earlier mentioned various reasons, though SP himself had possessed a sacred thread i.e. power), because SP himself contained that power i.e. the possession of the *gāyatrī*. If SP himself had not contained that power i.e. the possession of the *gāyatrī*, then he would also not have been entitled to pass on that power of attorney to Śārādīyā. Hence, the FDG's who have not received the power from SP - in the matter of the possession of a sacred thread - cannot also pass on that power of attorney to the appointed "proxy", be it some MDG or other.

2nd Possibility: Since, FDG is not eligible to appoint an MDG as proxy in the matter of giving sacred thread on her behalf {because the FDG herself doesn't possess that power in the form of sacred thread, though she might be possessing the power of *brahma-gāyatrī* (i.e. of *Purāṇic* status and not the Vedic status) - which is a completely different issue} to a male disciple, it seems that the only last option remaining with such an FDG, is to inspire an MDG to give sacred thread to that male disciple solely on the autonomous discretion of that MDG, but not on her behalf, as she doesn't have any power to do that (as just explained above).

If this is done i.e. if the MDG will start giving sacred thread to the male disciple of that FDG not on FDG's behalf, but rather in a completely autonomous way, then, the said MDG will have to be considered a second *dīkṣā-guru* for that male aspirant along with his primary *dīkṣā-guru* of second initiation i.e. the FDG. Hence, the most grievous offense unto the *guru-tattva* that can ever be imagined, shall be implemented; since, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī clearly prohibits the possibility of more than one *dīkṣā-guru* for a *sādhaka-bhakta*, and because, such norm is also followed by the current regulation for *dīkṣā* by ISKCON, allowing MDG to autonomously (not as a proxy of FDG, because that is impossible as we have just explained above) grant perform the sacred-thread ceremony for that male aspirant, will be considered to be the clear transgression of all the scriptural rules as well as the existing norms of our society in the matter of the 'singularity' of a *dīkṣā-guru*.

14) Aftermaths of implementing FDG provision in our institution.

If feminism (which is non-Vedic and hence, unauthentic) is allowed to be victorious in ISKCON by making alterations in the existing *guru-dīkṣā* policies, under the pretext, that since the contemporary western world has submitted to feminism, so we should also follow the same - then at some point of time in future (may be after some fifty or 100 years from now), when the "eunuchoidism" will start becoming socially and politically powerful (and this is going to happen - once the feminism is established on solid grounds - as an inevitable symptom of the ongoing Kali-yuga as predicted in various *purāṇas*), and when the future leadership of our institution will also start including eunuchs within our organization under the pretext that *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* is meant for everyone without any segregation of caste, creed, and gender - then will it be expected from an august organization like ISKCON to make further alterations in its *dīkṣā-guru* policies to even include eunuchs as *dīkṣā-gurus*? We, the traditionalists, are not asking this question. Rather, it is asked by the future generations of our devotees and leaderships to come. Those who are currently dedicating their lives in making the feminism strongly shaped within our society, it would be better for them to keep these answers also ready, because in a near future many more "isms" like "eunuchoidism" are going to take shape which are currently in a dormant stage, till the firm establishment of feminism - which is their predecessor.

Final Conclusion: 1) Sacred thread is a vital factor of *upanayanam-samskāra*. 2) *Upanayanam-samskāra* is not a *smārta* ritual but is rather a purely *vaiṣṇava* ritual; the *smārtas* have adopted it later on. 3) *Upanīti* is part of *sādhana-bhakti* as demonstrated above and is not merely a ritual used to classify *vaiṣṇavas* as *brāhmanas*. 4) Full *upanayanam-samskāra* means to have a sacred thread and not merely *brahma-gāyatrī mantra* as SP has stressed on the importance of sacred thread in our above quoted passage from C.C. 1.1.46's purport and especially its last sentence. 5) **ISKCON women do not undergo full *upanayanam-samskāra* and thus cannot act as a *dīkṣā-guru*, without any ifs and buts. That's final.** 6) For a woman to gain equal rights with man is not a symptom of Kṛṣṇa Consciousness. 7) For a woman, execution of – *strī-dharma*, is more important than preaching and deity worship. 8) Women is never to be given independence. 9) **Since *vaṇāśrama-dharma* cannot be rejected unless one is a *nirapekṣa-bhakta* and because the mood of contemporary *ācāryas* like SBSST and SP is not to reject the *daiva-varṇāśrama-dharma* due to its favourable aspects in the preaching mission of *goṣṭhyānandī-bhaktas*, it is to be concluded that ISKCON devotees of dual genders are bound to not trespass the norms of *daiva-varṇāśrama-dharma* even after attaining the qualification of a *nirapekṣa-bhakta*.** 10) Transgression of etiquette and behavioural norms as per one's prescribed occupation (i.e. in our case is *strī-dharma*) dissatisfies the Supreme Lord, is not in the nature of a true devotee, and destroys the spiritual life of a devotee both in this world and in the next. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Complete end of the total draft.

